M A Van Patten Me

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXVIII. ROBERT BONNER, {COR. OF WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS. SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1872. TERMS. {$3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 17.

A PORTRAIT.

BY JOEL BENTON.

I.

It was beauty, such as blesses
  Him who finds it, filled her face:
Darkly lustrous, wavy tresses
  Showed their tantalizing grace;
While Love, which torments or caresses,
  Made her heart its hiding-place.

II.

Splendors of the dewy morning,
  Wafts that stir bewitching skies,
Wove the web for her adorning;
  Mischief sparkled in her eyes:
From her lips, which closed for warning,
  Fell bewildering, low replies.

III.

She could dart the tenderest glances,
  Hold the wittiest interplay;
Sweet surprises, dreamy fancies
  Grew about her: You would say
Something richer than romance is,
  Kept her life embalmed in May!

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. BLAKE'S BITTER DISCOVERY.

Late in the evening Estelle Landry awoke from the long trance in which she had lain, and looked vaguely around the room in which she found herself. She seemed to make a faint struggle to remember something, but the effort was too much for her clouded faculties, and she faintly wailed forth:

"Where am I? What am I doing here? I don't like this place. Please take me away, somebody."

Mrs. Blake arose and bent over her.

"You are awake at last, my dear, and I am so happy that you can speak rationally again. Your head has been severely hurt, but you are better now."

"Who are you? I never saw you before—and I hate this mean looking place."

"It is hard that you don't remember your own mother, Hester," replied Mrs. Blake, with well-simulated sadness.

The girl's large black eyes opened to their utmost width, and she stared in a dazed way at the speaker, as she whispered:

"I had a mother, of course—everybody has; but I—I don't remember about her. What did you call me, ma'am? I 've forgotten my own name, and it isn't strange that I didn't know you."

"Your name you will soon learn again, Hester, and you will gradually come to remember me too, I trust. We are going to live together, and be all in all to each other, you know."

"Are we? But I hope we sha'n't stay here. I like pretty things, and I don't see anything that isn't hideous—that is, except you, ma'am. You are good looking enough; but isn't it strange that I should find out that you 're my mother? If you are, I wish you would bring me something to eat, for I feel rather hungry."

"I will have food brought to you immediately, and as soon as you are stronger I will take you back to our own home. You have had a sun-stroke, dear, and your poor mind is still affected by it."

Estelle raised her hand to her head, and softly said:

"Yes, that must have been the way of it, for my head aches yet, and I—I can't remember something that I know I ought to think of. I am very glad to find a mother, though it 's very odd that I didn't know I had one."

"You will remember all about me when you get better. There, dear, you must not talk any more. You must be very quiet, that you may get strong enough to be taken away from this place."

A smile of childish pleasure came into the wan face of the poor outraged girl, and she submissively said:

"I will be very good if you will really take me to a nicer place. I like flowers and pictures—don't you? And music is my passion; but I don't see any piano here. May be you have a guitar, though; I can play on that too, and sing. I—I used to sing for—for—somebody, but I can't think who it was. Strange, isn't it?"

"It will all come back to you after a little, if you will have patience. I will go now, and bring you something nice to eat."

"Thank you; perhaps I shall do better when I have had a cup of tea."

She said this with a graceful sweetness that shone even through the haze in which her faculties were shrouded. All knowledge of her own identity seemed to be swept from her mind, but her loving and grateful nature was apparent even in her changed condition. As Mrs. Blake would have turned away to go in search of the food she asked for, Estelle took her hand in her own, and looking earnestly in her half-averted face, asked:

"Is it really true that you are my mother? It seems strange that you have come to me so suddenly, when I did n't know about you. Kiss me before you go away; I am very fond of you already."

Mrs. Blake shrank from this ordeal, and she shuddered slightly as she stooped forward, but she could not refuse the caress. She barely touched her lips to the fair brow of the girl, and with a ghastly attempt to smile, said:

"I hope you are indeed fond of me Hester. It would be strange if you did not love your own mother. I must go now, dear."

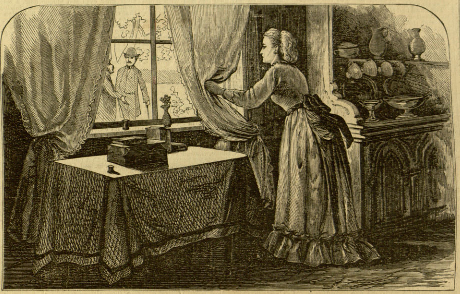
She extricated herself from the clinging clasp of the fingers, the touch of which seemed to burn into her very flesh, and hastily left the room. Estelle looked after her as if greatly puzzled, but quite satisfied with the new relation she had found. She vainly tried to collect her scattered senses, and comprehend the new phase of affairs. Memory was utterly paralyzed, and she found it impossible to recall any event of her past existence.

She did not long make the effort to do so, for a soft languor pervaded her frame, and like Tennyson's lotus eaters, she only asked to be let alone, that she might glide softly down to the sea of oblivion that awaited her.

Macon came softly into the room, and stood watching her some moments before he made his presence known. When he at length approached the bed, the young girl opened her eyes, and fastening a dreamy gaze on him, asked:

"Are you my father? I have found a mother, and of course I must have a father! I can't understand it all, but may be I shall when I get stronger."

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



HESTER BLAKE LISTENING TO THE CONVERSATION OF DR. MACON AND HERBERT SPENCER.

"O yes; when you are better, you will remember all that is necessary," he soothingly replied. "You have been very ill, you know, and I am your physician. The sun has affected your brain, but you will soon be quite well now. You have no father living, but your mother is devoted to you."

A faint quiver of pain passed over the sensitive mouth, and she said:

"Are you sure I have no father? It seems to me that I had one once, and he was very good to me, but—somehow I've lost him, and I can't find him again. What is the reason I can't think what has become of him? If you 're a doctor, you ought to know."

Macon was not touched by her words, but he was a little alarmed at this effort of memory, faint and dubious as it was, and he felt her pulse, and said:

"You are a little feverish yet, and I must use my best skill in your behalf. After you have taken some nourishment, I will give you something that will make you forget all these fancies; they are not good for you."

"I don't want to forget. I 'd like better to remember; but what is the use? I feel very happy. I believe I could float away as the birds do, if I only had wings. I don't want to think about anything—thinking is tiresome; don't you find it so?"

"Sometimes. But here comes your supper, and you must eat some of it before I give you your drops."

Eunice came in with a waiter, followed by Mrs. Blake, and the open-mouthed astonishment of the girl when she looked at Estelle was almost ludicrous. She hastened to place her burden on the foot of the bed, and kept gesticulating violently till Mrs. Blake explained to her that this was not her daughter. When Eunice seemed to doubt the fact, she made signs to her to look into the next room and see for herself that Hester was sitting by the sick gentleman.

The girl ran quickly to the door, opened it a few inches, and looked in to see the hand of Miss Blake raised in warning, as she pointed to her slumbering charge. The door swung to, and Eunice came back with a broad smile of delight on her simple face.

Estelle had watched this pantomime with astonishment. Her mind did not seem capable of grasping the facts of the case, but a low musical laugh rippled from her lips, and she said:

"What funny people you are. Can't you speak out, in place of doing all that acting? Tell that girl to give me my tea before it gets cold. I don't like cold tea."

"I will give it to you, my dear," said Mrs. Blake. "This is Eunice Barker, a very nice young woman who will help me to wait on you; but she can't hear what we say, and of course can't speak herself. You will soon get used to her, and learn how to communicate with her."

"I am not going to twist my face up, and make flourishes with my hands, if that is all the way one can tell her anything," replied Estelle rather pettishly. "I want people to talk, and tell me ever so much that I have forgotten. Something is wrong in my head, but I suppose it will come right after a while."

"O yes, of course it will," said Macon. "I will prepare a nice draught for you that will make you all right."

Mrs. Blake raised the pillows that supported the sick girl's head, and she eagerly drank the tea that was offered her, and daintily ate the small quantity of solid food which had been brought for her.

Eunice hovered around her with an expression of such absorbing interest, that Estelle noticed it, and when she put the tea-cup down she held out her hand to her, and said:

"You are good, if you can't talk, and I like your face. I am glad you 're going to wait on me. Come, now, it 's of no use to make that horrid noise in your throat, because it 's only unpleasant to hear. We 'll find out some way to understand each other without that."

The dumb girl raised the slender hand to her lips, and then placed it tenderly on the coverlet, pointing at the same time to her heart, and bending her head as if in submission. Estelle nodded, as if she understood the implied devotion to her wishes, and with a faint sigh said:

"That will do. I am tired now; too tired even to think. Go away, please; I want to rest and get better; for I know there is something for me to do that I can't bring back to my mind."

"Take this draught, and perhaps it will help you to steady your thoughts," said Macon, advancing from the closet at which he had been preparing a second dose of his "imbecile powder."

Esther took the glass from his hand, and with a little nod and smile that almost unnerved him, hard as he was, drank off the fatal potion, and with a sparkle of merriment, said:

"What a nice doctor you are, to give what is not nauseous to the taste. I am going to sleep now, and when I wake up I hope this dreadful ringing will be gone out of my head, and I shall know all about the things that run away from me so strangely."

She sunk back and closed her eyes, and Mrs. Blake made signs to Eunice to remove the tray to the kitchen, and return to her duties there. The girl rather reluctantly obeyed, and when she was gone, Mrs. Blake drew Macon to the window and asked, in a low tone:

"What will be the effect of *this* potion? The first one seems only to have dulled her memory for a time. Something more potent must be tried on her, or she will give us trouble yet."

"Have no fears, Mrs. Blake. I understand what I am about. I don't wish to destroy the girl's mind entirely, if she can be rendered harmless without injuring her to that extent. The broken links of memory she will never be able to gather up again unless I will her to do so. I possess the antidote to the drug she has taken, but I shall never be called on to use it if Hester is true to her compact with me. Since Miss Landry is to remain under your care for some time, it will be better for you that she shall not be made stupid and unmanageable. When the time comes to give her up to others I shall have secured my own reward, and I can then give the *coup de grace* to a mind that seems to be one of more than ordinary brightness. It is a pity to be forced to such extremity, but for our own safety there is no other course left."

"You pity her then," said Mrs. Blake, in a low, fierce tone, "and you may shrink from doing what is necessary when the time comes. If you do, leave it to me. I have but one feeling for Eleanor Russell's daughter, and that is—loathing. Yet she made me *kiss* her, and I shall be forced to treat her as kindly as if I were indeed her mother."

Macon coolly surveyed her, and coldly said:

"I regret that your feelings toward this poor girl are so bitterly hostile, for there must be no flaw in your acting, Madam; if you give others the slightest cause to suspect your antipathy to your supposed daughter, it may lead to detection, and you know what that would bring on us all."

The woman laughed harshly, and clasped her hands around her slender throat with a pantomimic motion.

"*That* is what it will bring *you* to; to Hester and me, as we are women, they might award solitary confinement and hard labor for life. I should go mad under that discipline, and kill myself; what she would do I can't say, but something hardly less desperate, I fancy."

Macon shuddered at this picture.

"For God's sake, Madam, don't look and talk in that way, or I may be tempted to back out of the whole thing. It is not too late yet to reconsider, and undo all that we have done."

His words calmed Mrs. Blake at once. She resumed her usual manner, and coldly said:

"It *is* too late, and I will not have you speak in this way. I can control my thrilling sense of aversion to the girl, and I shall do my part as perfectly as you will yours. If you recoil now, Hester shall never speak to you again."

"You forget that I possess other means of bringing both you and her to terms," said Macon, with a ring of menace in his voice. "A word from me would bring obloquy and disgrace upon *you;* but so long as I believe that your daughter returns the passion I feel for her, you are quite safe. Attempt to turn her against me, and there is nothing—*nothing* that I would not do to avenge my disappointment. Even if I ruined myself in crushing you, I would not hesitate; for what should I have to live or labor for, if Hester Blake were lost to me?"

"Good heavens, Julian! how passionate and unreasonable you are! You fly off at such a tangent that I scarcely know how to deal with you. After having accepted you as my son, it is not likely that *I* shall attempt to change my daughter's feelings toward you. I wish you to be happy in your union, and bound together as we three shall be, we *must* have faith in each other, or there will be no safety for any of us."

"I beg pardon for my violence, Mrs. Blake, but your threat about Hester made me forget myself. You have such an influence over her that you can make her do almost anything. She has given me such pledges as should assure me of her good faith, but I am too much in love not to imagine possibilities which I hope will never arise. To win her for my wife, I am willing to do and dare what most men would shrink from, and any doubt suggested by you is naturally distasteful to me."

Macon moved away from her, and again made a careful examination of his patient. She was already sleeping heavily, with half-closed eyes and parted lips. He grimly said:

"She is safe enough now for many hours; and when she again arouses, she will be too dull to do more than accept the nourishment that must be in readiness for her. We will keep her in that condition till she is removed to your cottage and safely installed there. Then she can be gradually allowed to revive to a consciousness of what is passing around her. You had better go in to Eunice, and give her to understand that to-morrow Miss Landry will be well enough to get up and move about the house. She must be deceived, as well as others, or she may give us trouble."

"She is so simple she will never suspect anything. Besides, why should she? She knows nothing of our motives for making the exchange we intend to accomplish."

Mrs. Blake went into the kitchen, and Macon walked out and paced beneath the trees until sunset. He then took Hester's place beside Mr. Landry, who was sinking rapidly, and only awoke at intervals to ask for water. He had ceased to inquire about his daughter, and seemed to be lapsing quietly into the unconsciousness which precedes death.

He had talked with Hester at intervals throughout the day, and he had once expressed a strong wish that a priest could be brought to confess him, and give the last sacraments of the church to which he belonged. But he remembered what Macon had said on the subject, and with a sigh added:

"I must trust to the mercy of God—and that, I know, is infinite. I have committed faults innumerable, but I can only pray in this supreme hour that they may be condoned by Him who is about to receive and judge my soul. If a priest could have been found, he and Dr. Macon could have proved to my daughter that I dictated the letter you wrote for me this morning. I am sure she will act upon it without hesitation, but it would have been better to have witnesses to prove that I have given you that money."

"I entreat that you will not distress yourself about that, sir," Hester replied. "It may not be impossible to get a Sister of Charity here, for one visits Blanton twice each year, and this is about the time for her to come. I will remind Dr. Macon of it, and he may make an effort to get her out in time to see you."

"Ah! if he could—if he only could, how glad I should be. In my present strait, that will be better than no religious consolation at all."

It had suddenly occurred to Hester that his anxiety to receive spiritual aid might enable her mother to enter his room in the character of the Sister of Charity who was improvised for the occasion, and sit beside him. In spite of the bitterness Mrs. Blake had expressed toward him, Hester believed that in secret her heart yearned over this man, who had been the solitary love of her life, and that she naturally wished to see the last of him, although he so fiercely repelled her presence.

At the first opportunity she communicated her idea to Macon, but he shook his head and said:

"I hardly think that your mother meditates a consolatory interview with him. I have promised her that she shall speak with him before the end comes; but for his sake, I hope his senses will be so much dulled by the approach of death, that he will not be able to understand what she wishes to say. You can tell her, though, what you have thought of, and if she chooses to assume the character of a Sister of Charity for the purpose of getting into his room, she can easily do it. In the black dress she wears, with a dark handkerchief tied over her head, she can go in to-night and sit with him; but I am afraid that it is very little consolation he will get from her."

"I am sure she talks harder than she feels, and I will tell her, at any rate."

Mrs. Blake eagerly grasped at the suggestion when it was made, for she felt as if she would give half the remaining years of her life to be near Landry in the supreme hours that approached. There was a dark struggle going on within her, in which tender memories of the past were battling with the fierce resentment she had so long cherished toward him. Which would conquer when they were once more brought face to face, she could hardly have told herself, bitterly as she had talked of him since she knew he was near her.

It was arranged that after night, when the room was dimly lighted by a single candle, she should go in and listen to such confessions as he wished to make. In them, if he spoke of her tenderly, compassionately, she would forego the dire vengeance she had planned to inflict on him when he lay helpless before her, breathing his soul away in doubt and dread of what the future life might bring to him. If he judged her hardly and cruelly at the last, she would have no mercy on him.

Such was her resolve as she prepared that night for the painful ordeal that awaited her.

When Eunice was safely asleep, lying across the foot of Estelle Landry's bed, she made such alteration in her dress as was necessary. A white handkerchief was drawn low down on her forehead, and folded over her face in such a manner as to conceal the greater portion of it, and Macon's black silk cravat was smoothed out and tied over that, in the form of the hoods worn by Catholic nuns when walking abroad. She then entered the feebly lighted room, and sat down in the chair which Hester resigned at her approach. At the movement thus made, the dying man unclosed his eyes, and in a faint, wavering voice, said:

"How good you were to come to me in this extremity. This young girl has explained to me that you consented to do so as soon as you heard that a son of Mother Church needed your help. It was a fortunate chance that brought you near me at this crisis."

Mrs. Blake murmured a few words which were almost inaudible, and in the muffled tones of her voice Landry recognized nothing that was familiar; but some subtle power must have conveyed to him the knowledge that something inimical and terrible to him had approached him, for he suddenly seemed to struggle with some deadly oppression, and sinking back, he murmured:

"Too late! I fear that I shall die before I can say what I wished. I must confess—must have absolution, for I have sinned. But I have suffered—the All-seeing One, who reads the secrets of the heart, knows how deep has been my self-condemnation—how bitter a cup I have drained in atonement of the one act of my life which brought unhappiness to one who thought she had the right to avenge herself upon me."

In a voice scarcely above a whisper, Mrs. Blake said:

"My son, the mercy of God is infinite; forgive as you hope to be forgiven, and all will be well with you."

"Ah! that is what I cannot do; and my soul writhes under the consciousness that I cannot obey the command of that Divine One who taught us the duty of pardoning others, if we presume to ask grace for ourselves. All is dark before me, for there is one sin and one sinner that I have not forgiven. But for that I could die in peace."

"Was the wrong against you so unmerited, that you feel thus bitterly?"

"Unmerited! Yes; I assert that, and I believe it. She who committed it was one thrown on my compassion, to whom I would have given a better future than that she chose for herself. I did not love her, though I was tricked into a marriage with her; the tie was speedily broken, and I took to my heart the woman I adored. There was no wrong in that. I could not give up my life to a woman I had never loved."

In a faltering voice Mrs. Blake said:

"You did not *love* her! Are you quite sure of that?"

Landry was too deeply absorbed in his own thoughts to notice the menacing tone that thrilled through the muffled voice of the speaker.

"No, I never loved her; I knew that from the beginning of our acquaintance. She interested, amused and flattered me, and I sought her society in the absence of the girl to whom I was already betrothed. Wide as the poles asunder were those two natures, and when I bowed before the incarnation of womanly purity and truth in the person of my lost Ellinor, I deeply deplored the entanglement into which I had been so shamefully ensnared."

"Is it just to lay all the blame upon the woman who risked so much to gain a legal claim upon you? To those who have loved truly, much should be forgiven; and she, you say, loved you, though she received nothing in return save obloquy and indifference."

"I gave her all that she had a right to claim at my hands—freedom from the ties that bound her—independence; and had she so willed it, I would have sent her from me as free from reproach as in the hour of our first unfortunate meeting. But she would not go. I was very young. I loved the child she gave me, and through her the mother hoped, if I were free again, to win me back, and—and—I cannot tell you what she did in return for the forbearance I had shown toward her. It is *her* secret, and I will not reveal it even in this hour, but it is that which I now find it impossible to forgive. If you can give me absolution, knowing that, I will accept it gladly at your hands, although you are not one of the accredited ministers of our Holy church. Such consolation as you can afford me is better than none."

The heart of Mrs. Blake hardened as she listened. She felt the blood surging through her veins with fiery swiftness, and all the passion of her tropical nature burst forth.

She tore the shrouding folds from her head and face, and started to her feet, standing over him as a menacing fate, as she mockingly said:

"Such consolation as *I* can give, you are welcome to, Armand Landry. Whether it will facilitate your entrance to the Paradise in which your lost Ellinor dwells, or into the Hades in which *I* shall hereafter claim you, I leave you to imagine. Look at the woman you cast off so lightly—the woman who believed that you loved her—and cower before her glance as you soon will shrink before that of the Omnipotent Being who will judge between us."

If a glance could have withered, that which shot from the large black eyes of Landry would have annihilated the woman who thus spoke. There was horror, loathing, and infinite despair in its wild expression, and he started up, and sat erect in his bed, as he waved the arm he could still use, in a menacing manner.

"You—*you* here!" he exclaimed, in a loud, harsh voice. "How dare you approach me? How dare you profane the sacred character you have assumed for the purpose of intruding upon a presence that was forbidden you? Hagar Blake, you have been the curse of my life, and in death you persecute me still. *Go!* I command you to leave this room unpolluted by the presence of a murderess."

Hagar's eyes blazed back defiance, and she tauntingly said:

"You are in no position *now* to enforce your will. You trampled me under your feet in other days, and made me submit to the fate you decreed me, but now our parts are changed. You are in my power, not I in yours, and I intend to pay you back drop for drop, for all the bitterness you have poured into my cup and forced me to drink."

The features of Landry were blanched to the hue of death, and his black eyes gleamed fiercely from their pallid setting, as he hoarsely asked:

"By whose connivance were you permitted to enter here? If Hester or her betrothed husband aided you, it will be the worse for them, for in that case I will give her nothing. The paper I caused her to write this morning will be valueless unless it is signed and witnessed, and now I will do neither."

"Oh, you threaten me with consequences, do you?" she mockingly asked: "but let me assure you that it is a matter of indifference to me, and also to my daughter, whether that paper is valueless or not. We have settled our plans, and rave against them as you may, you will be powerless to prevent them from being carried into effect. Hester will not accept the paltry provision you have so magnanimously made for her; she will claim what is hers, in justice at least—the half of the estate which is now held by your other children."

"Woman! what do you mean by that? Ah! my God! have I fallen into a den of thieves? Is there no one to help me?"

His voice broke suddenly, and he fell back upon his pillows gasping for breath.

"*No one*," repeated Mrs. Blake, with stern emphasis. "You are in this solitary country house, entirely at my mercy, and that of those who are willing to do all that I wish. The darling daughter on whom you have lavished so much indulgence lies stricken into idiocy by the injuries her head has received. She will never more walk the earth in pride, looking down in scorn upon the sister whom you have bequeathed to her compassion. In place of that, I have decreed that the two shall change places, and the child of your adored Ellinor shall stay with *me*, while *my* daughter assumes the station of the heiress, and wears the honors of her father's house. The two sisters are so much alike that no one will ever be able to distinguish the true one from her counterfeit."

The listener felt that the shock of this announcement had shortened his brief span of life; he knew that the death clutch was already on his vitals; but he rallied his last remaining strength, and said, with solemn emphasis:

"If you consummate this wickedness, I leave to you, and to the impostor who will take the place of my darling, my undying malediction. God is over all, and he will not permit such villainy to go unpunished, even in this world."

Mrs. Blake unclosed her lips to reply, but Landry raised his hand appealingly, a change passed over his sunken face, and with effort he murmured:

"O Father in Heaven, whose ear is always open to those who call on thee in extremity, I pray Thee to watch over my unfortunate Estelle, and release her from the harpies who are ready for any wrong to her; bring home to them the evil they are meditating against a helpless being who never injured them, and restore her to her own. That Thou wilt do this in Thy own good time, I believe, and I resign my spirit to Thy holy keeping. Amen."

With the last word the fluttering breath left the livid lips, and the wrung spirit escaped from further torture at the hands of the merciless foe who stood above him.

She stood looking down on him many moments with an expression of contemptuous scorn that was terrible in such a moment. With bitter hardness, she muttered:

"It is over! The life for which I would once have given my own has passed away from earth, and here I stand, exulting in the knowledge that eternity divides us. *He never loved me.* I know that he spoke the truth in his dying hour, though from other lips I would not have believed it. But he would have been true to his plighted vows if that woman had never come between us. I thrust her away, in the mad hope that he would return to me; but he would not, because—*he never loved me!* Well—I have been avenged on both, and that is something."

She turned away, took up the discarded handkerchiefs, and again wrapped them around her head, though her hand was not quite steady as she did so.

After a few moments she went into the adjoining apartment, and briefly said to the two who sat at the open door:

"All is over. We are now free to carry our plans into effect."

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL.

The two to whom Mrs. Blake spoke arose, and Macon repeated:

"All over! I did not think he would die before midnight, and it is scarcely ten o'clock. I am afraid that you excited him, Mrs. Blake, and hastened the catastrophe. It seemed a pity to worry the poor man, when nothing was to be gained by torturing him."

She looked at the speaker coldly, and said:

"I had an object to gain, and I have attained it. Let that suffice. Go in to him now, and prepare him for the grave that is yawning to receive him. When that is done, we will remove Miss Landry to the back room, and Hester shall take her place."

He silently obeyed her, and Mrs. Blake sunk down upon the chair he had left, and buried her face in her hands. The daughter laid her hand upon her shoulder, and softly said:

"It must have been a severe trial to you to see him die, mother, for you loved him once."

There was a long silence, and then Mrs. Blake vaguely said:

"I am very cold. It seems to me as if all the fire in my blood had suddenly died out. I feel as if I were turned to stone, Hester; and so too would you feel, if you had heard what I have listened to to-night."

"Did he reproach you because you wished to be near him at such a time? I hope you did not say anything hard or harsh to him in his last moments, mother."

"If I did, he gave me the provocation. He declared that he had never loved me, though I always consoled myself with the belief that he did care for me till my rival stepped in between us. I know better now. He only endured me for a brief season—and I— Ah, how I loved him once!"

She arose abruptly, went out into the night, and roamed beneath the shadows of the trees, recalling the bitter past, and hardening her purpose to carry out her plans, in spite of the malediction which had been so fervently uttered that she felt it might, in time, fall and crush her.

Two hours later Macon came out in search of her, for Hester had become alarmed by her protracted absence. He found her walking to and fro, with her hands clasped over her head, and he took her by the arm, and said:

"Come in, Mrs. Blake, and take some rest. If you go on this way, you will not be in a condition to do what will be required of you to-morrow. With Hester's assistance, I have removed Miss Landry to your bed, and Hester will take her place before Eunice wakes up. I shall watch alone with the dead."

She unclasped her hands, and took the arm he offered her, as she said:

"I am glad you came for me, for I have tired myself out walking so much after all I have done to-day, yet I might have gone on till I dropped down from fatigue, without thinking of what is depending upon me, if you had not reminded me of the duties before me. Isn't it a dreadful thing to have the illusion of a life dispelled, Julian? I have cherished but one, but that is gone with the rest—gone with the breath that destroyed it—and I will grieve for it no more than I will for him who took it from me. My life has been a terrible mistake, but it is too late now to try to remedy that. I will at least give my daughter a better chance than I had, even if it is purchased at the expense of separating myself from her, and taking in her place the girl who is more than an alien to me."

"The separation will not be a long one," replied Macon soothingly, for he saw that she was both excited and exhausted. "Come in, and try to sleep for a few hours. In the morning you must be fresh and strong for what we have to do. Your nerves must not fail you in the crisis of our destiny."

"I promise you they shall not do that. I have been living over a few years of my life since I have been walking here to-night; but I have buried them, and set a gravestone above them, and the phantoms that arise from such graves shall be exorcised by the power of as strong a will as woman ever had."

The moon had risen above the tree tops, and was flooding the broken pathway with light.

Hester stood at the gate watching for her mother's return. She shivered slightly as she said:

"It is past midnight. I was afraid to stay in the house with the dead, so I came out to meet you. Eunice sleeps heavily, and I thought it best not to awaken her. Listen to that owl sending its long shrill cry through the woods. No wonder it is called a bird of ill omen; when I first heard its voice, it sent a thrill of dread and horror through me, and I could not remain without a soul to speak to."

The owl had perched in a large oak-tree that grew in the yard, and his lugubrious notes echoed through the solitary glen, and were replied to by others not far away.

"It is a dreary sound," said Macon, "and the place seems to be full of them. Go in and try to sleep, Hester, dear, and you will soon forget all about your nocturnal serenade."

The three entered the house, and Mrs. Blake cast a wistful glance at her daughter, as she said:

"Good-night, my child. It seems to me as if this is the last hour in which I shall really call you my own. After to-night, you will be no longer Hester Blake, but Estelle Landry, and with the change of name, a wide gulf seems to be opening between us. A few more days, and we must part for an indefinite period."

"Yes, we must part; but it shall not be for long, I promise you that, mother. You must go in and lie down beside my sister now, and I must bandage my head, put on one of Estelle's gowns, and prepare to take upon myself the new state that has fallen to me. I shall bear myself right royally under my new honors, you may be sure of that."

There was a faint tone of exultation in her voice, and Mrs. Blake folded her to her heart, and whispered:

"I see that it gives you joy to claim this inheritance, though you seemed to hesitate about taking it with the necessary incumbrance of Julian Macon. But remember my words, Hester. Such love as his is worth more than gold, for all that ever was coined cannot buy the free devotion of a human heart. I gave mine for nothing, as I now know—I got no equivalent; but you—*you* will be more generous to this poor man who risks so much for you, than the one I so stupidly loved was to me. Shall it not be so, dear?"

The girl wearily drooped her head, and said:

"I will do the best I can. Good-night, mother."

Mrs. Blake kissed her again, and then went out into the narrow entry which divided the kitchen from a shed room which had been built upon what had once been a back gallery. The door was half open, and a candle was placed on a shelf in one corner, by the dim light of which she could see the interior.

A pine bedstead stood on one side, on which a mattress and sheets had been placed, and on them lay the unfortunate girl who was hereafter to take her daughter's place in the house, if not in her heart. How she loathed the thought! Yet she must endure Estelle's presence, and restrain the hatred that day by day would, she believed, grow more envenomed, as she felt herself forced to sustain the part she had undertaken.

There was no chair in the room, and she sat down on the foot of the bed, and pressed her hand over her eyes, to shut out the white face that lay so still before her. She had no compassion for that poor girl, thrust out of her Eden in the opening years of her life; but she pitied herself, and tried to think that all she had done, and all she still meant to do, had been forced upon her by a relentless fate.

Mrs. Blake was aroused from her painful thoughts by a touch on her shoulder, and looking up, she saw Macon standing over her with a cup in his hand. He said:

"I feared that you would be thinking, in place of sleeping, and I have prepared a sedative for you which you must take. If you do not, you will be quite unfit for the work we shall have in hand to-morrow."

"You are right. I must be prepared for that, and I have felt as if I am going mad within the last few hours. My blood rushes through my veins as if it is on fire, and then it stagnates, and I feel as if I am numbed to the soul. I thought I had strength for all that could happen, and here I am almost ready to break down at the moment in which courage is most needed."

Macon fixed his cold, scrutinizing glance upon her, and after feeling her pulse, said:

"It is fortunate I came to look after you, or you might really have been unfitted for action at a time when your help will be most needed. Drink this, and lie down; in half an hour you will be asleep."

"Yes—beside her," she replied, with a shudder, as she took the cup, and swallowed the potion. "If the spirits of the dead *can* come back, *his* will come in here and stifle me as I sleep."

"Ah, bah! that is idle talk, Mrs. Blake, and quite unworthy of a woman of your sense. Go to sleep without indulging in such fantasies, and I will engage to keep the dead man from coming after you."

She sighed heavily, and placed herself on the side of the bed as far away from Estelle as was possible.

"I will try to sleep now. Put the light in the entry, and leave the door ajar."

Macon performed these services, and Mrs. Blake lay in the silent room listening to the summer wind rustling through a vine that grew over the window, and shivering as the hooting of the owls at intervals broke the awful silence in which all nature seemed to be plunged.

At first her eyes would not close, but gradually the effects of the narcotic she had taken made themselves felt; sleep fell on her senses, at first calm and peaceful enough, but as dawn was breaking a frightful dream came to her, in which she struggled through a sea of horrors from which there seemed to be no escape, and she started up awake, and bathed in cold perspiration.

Eunice was standing beside her with a cup of coffee which she had just brought in. Estelle was also awake, but she lay like one in a placid dream, and did not seem to notice anything passing around her.

The repose she so much needed had restored to Mrs. Blake the command of her faculties, and by the time she had drank the coffee she was ready for her part.

She made signs to Eunice, informing her that her daughter was ill from the effects of the sun upon her brain when she stayed out so long on the previous day—that she feared something serious would result, and they must be very careful of her.

The girl went around the bed, and took the nerveless hand of the sick girl in her own. The rings Estelle Landry had worn had been removed, with the exception of a plain, massive hoop, very similar to one belonging to Hester, which had been left on her slender finger. The simple girl who looked down on her never for an instant doubted that this was her young lady, stricken by some sudden and mysterious illness. She appeared to be very much concerned, and Mrs. Blake affected to comfort her by assurances that Dr. Macon's skill would soon restore her daughter to her usual health.

She then sent Eunice for food for the sick girl, and in her absence arranged her own dress, and smoothed her tumbled hair with the aid of the side combs she wore. The girl had already placed a pitcher of water, with a basin and towel, on the shelf, and after using them, she poured fresh water on a corner of the napkin, and laved the face and hands of her passive charge. While thus employed, the filmy eyes of the poor girl turned on her, and she feebly said:

"Mother—it is good to have a mother."

Mrs. Blake shrank away from her, but at that moment Eunice came in, and she forced herself to stoop forward and kiss the brow of her pretended daughter. The caress was passively received, for the faint gleam of intelligence had already died out, and with much effort was Estelle induced to swallow a small portion of the nourishment brought for her. She turned from it with a shiver of loathing, and again closed her eyes, as if she wished to sleep.

Mrs. Blake signed to have the waiter taken away, and Eunice rather reluctantly left the room. In a few moments Macon came to the door, and asked:

"May I come in? Eunice has been gesticulating at me in such a way that I began to fear she suspects something is wrong."

"You can enter, but you misunderstood the girl. She is only concerned because she thinks my daughter is in danger. I am sure she has no suspicion of the exchange that has been made. If I did not know it, I should hardly believe it myself. Was ever likeness more perfect, even between twin sisters?"

"It is lucky for us that it is so," replied Macon, looking down on the helpless victim of cupidity as if he himself had not been the agent whose subtle power had brought her to such a pass as this. "She will not trouble you much to-day, Mrs. Blake, though you must show the greatest solicitude for her condition when others come upon the scene. I am going to the village to bring out such assistance as we shall need, and to make arrangements for removing the body of Mr. Landry to Louisiana with as little delay as possible. The sooner Hester gets away, the better for us all."

"Yes, I suppose so," replied Mrs. Blake, in a stifled tone. "I must part from her, but it will be for the first time since she was born. Ah, well, it is my own scheme she carries out, and I will not shrink back now."

"I should think not. Breakfast is ready, I believe, and Hester is up and dressed. Eunice can come in here and stay with Miss Landry while we eat it. She must get used to her, and there will be no danger in leaving them together."

They went into the kitchen, where Hester stood looking as white as a ghost, with a bandage around her head that quite concealed her long hair. She had put on the black travelling dress of her sister, and it fitted her as perfectly as if it had been made for her. There was an expression of languor in her face which might have deceived keener eyes than those of simple Eunice, and she looked sad enough to induce the belief that she was grieving over the loss she had so lately sustained.

She mechanically ate what was offered her, and acquiesced in such arrangements as Macon thought it necessary to make. When the meal was over, she went into the outer room and again threw herself on the bed, saying:

"I am tired, and I wish to think. Come back as soon as possible, Julian, and bring with you those who will take *that* away," pointing to the room in which her father's body lay. "I have never been in the house with the dead before, and—and somehow it is dreadful to me."

"The dead cannot harm us; it is the living that we have cause to fear. I need not caution you, however, for you understand fully how much depends on the way you act your part within the next few hours."

"Yes, I understand; that man was my father as much as *hers*, and I have as good a right to grieve over him. I am grieving more than you would think, but I am not repenting. I would not be Hester Blake again, if I could, for I begin to feel the pride of the Landrys stirring within me. To-day I am worth half a million; think of it! and yesterday I was as poor as a church mouse. Do you think that I can be wanting to myself when so much is at stake for me—*and for you?*" she added, in her soft, false tone.

"I know that I can trust you in everything," said Macon, with a gleam of triumph in his eyes, and he stooped forward and kissed her. "I must go now, but I will be back in two hours at furthest."

Hester had not shrunk from the caress, but Macon had no sooner passed through the door than she wiped her lips with an expression of bitter and contemptuous disgust.

"What right had he to kiss Estelle Landry? If Eunice had seen him, it might have ruined all. It is the last time he shall take such a liberty till I am forced to fulfill my contract with him. Oh, I cannot! *I cannot!* I will die sooner than give up Ray for that man. I must find a way to baffle him, or all I have won will be worthless. My mother talks of his great love for me, and seems to think it of more value than any other I am likely to win. Pah! it is odious—it is tiresome; but I am in his toils, and only my own skill can extricate me. Well, we shall see, Dr. Julian Macon, which will come out winner in the desperate game we are playing."

She buried her face in the pillow, and tried to shut out the sense of dreary wretchedness that oppressed her in spite of the exultation she had expressed in her new possessions. She was quite ready to claim the position of which she had robbed her unconscious sister, but the thought of what a living lie her life must henceforth be was not agreeable to her.

Hester was startled from these thoughts by the sound of voices in the yard, in one of which she recognized Macon's, but the other was perfectly strange to her. It spoke quite close to the door.

"My grandmother sent for me as soon as your letter reached her, Doctor Macon, and entreated me to come on here and see if I could be of any use. I am quite taken by surprise at the news of Mr. Landry's death; from what you stated, I thought his injuries but trifling."

"So I believed at the time I wrote to Mrs. Spencer, but you know how difficult it is to judge of such cases. There was severe internal injury which I scarcely suspected at first, for he bore up against his sufferings so bravely that I thought his crushed arm was the most that needed care. Yesterday morning I discovered that his condition was much more critical than I had supposed, but I knew it would be useless to write again to his friends, as all must be over before any of them could reach him."

"Yet it would have been kindness to Miss Landry to summon friends to her assistance on whom she has some claim. You should have thought of that, sir; for it is a dreadful position for her to be placed in. She is not personally acquainted with me, but she knows who Herbert Spencer is, and she is aware that I have the right to serve her. I understood you to say that she is well enough to receive me: it is a sad time to ask for an interview, but I shall be glad to speak with her a few moments, that I may tell her how entirely I am at her service."

"It is fortunate that you have come hither, Mr. Spencer," said Macon, who had stopped outside of the door, but near enough to it to enable Hester to overhear every word that was spoken, and thus have time to prepare herself for what was approaching. "I hope, for Miss Landry's sake, that your time is quite at your own disposal, for she insists on taking the body of her father to Louisiana immediately. But for your opportune arrival, I must have left my business and have gone with her at least as far as Boston, from which place she insists on embarking. Now I can place her under your protection, and you can probably accompany her to her distant home. It is a sad pilgrimage she wishes to undertake, but she will not be turned from it, for her father exacted from her a promise to place him beside the other members of his family who have preceded him to the land of shadows."

"It is a holy duty, and one I will assist her to perform to the utmost limit of my ability," was the grave reply. "I will take Miss Landry to my grandmother, who was expecting her when this unfortunate accident happened. She will be tenderly welcomed, as she well knows, and everything done for her that is possible. I was to have gone to New Orleans in October, to reside there permanently, and I shall consider it no hardship to hasten my voyage a few weeks, if I can be of service to one who has almost the claim of relationship upon me."

The speaker was a young man of twenty-six, tall, handsome, and well formed, with clear gray eyes and blonde hair, a reticent mouth, and a calm way of scrutinizing all that came within the range of his vision that made Macon feel slightly uncomfortable. But he reassured himself with the thought that Hester would be equal to the emergency, and he calmly replied:

"I am sure that Miss Landry will be most grateful for the considerate kindness you manifest toward her. A lady from Blanton, who happens to be a distant connection of the family, came hither with her daughter as soon as she heard of the accident, and the young lady has not been left alone in her bereavement. Mrs. Blake would have removed both father and daughter to her own house had it been possible to do so. Sit under the shade of this tree a few moments if you please, Mr. Spencer, and I will go in and prepare Miss Landry to receive you. The accommodations in the house are scanty, as you may perceive from its external appearance, and you will excuse me for not asking you in at once."

"Certainly. I can wait here till Miss Landry is ready to receive me;" and Spencer sat down in the chair Macon had brought out for his own use that morning.

He went in, and found Hester so near the door that he knew she had been listening intently to what was passing without. She put her finger on her lip, and the two passed into the kitchen, where they could speak together without being observed by Eunice.

"You heard what he said. Do you know anything of him? Are you prepared to accept his offers of service without danger of betraying ignorance on points that may be fatal to you?" asked Macon, with such eagerness as betrayed his own fears.

"Do not get excited; and don't approach me more nearly than you would if I really were the person I assume to be. Eunice cannot understand words, but she may correctly interpret actions, and she is watching us attentively. I know who Herbert Spencer is, and I can 'play the play out' without danger of detection from him. I have been reading over the letters I found in Estelle's trunk, and from them I have learned the secret of the Spencers' interest in her."

"And it is—" he stopped, almost breathless, and the girl made a sign of caution to him. At that moment Mrs. Blake came for Eunice, and sent her away to wait on the invalid. She had caught a glimpse of the stranger, and in much alarm came to inquire who he was, and what had brought him hither.

With perfect coolness Hester explained to her, and then turning to Macon, answered the query he had put:

"The secret is this: Estelle is betrothed to Raymond De Lorme, the grandson of Mrs. Spencer, and the cousin of the young man the old lady has sent hither. She was on her way to visit his family when she fell into our hands."

Macon staggered back, and his face became livid, as he hoarsely said:

"If such is the state of affairs, I refuse to have anything further to do with this conspiracy. I will not have another pretender stepping in to claim what is my own by every law of right and justice. Hester, how have you dared to conceal this discovery from me?"

She smiled scornfully, and coldly replied:

"I dare do anything that seems good to me, as you will know to your cost, perhaps, some of these days. You need have no immediate dread of Mr. De Lorme, for he is at present travelling in Europe, and he is not expected to return for a year or two. In the interim, nothing will be easier than to break with him, and of course I shall do that. Before he returns, our marriage can take place, and nothing will be left to him but to wear the willow as gracefully as possible. As to showing you my sister's correspondence, I thought it enough to make myself mistress of her private affairs, without betraying them to another."

Macon breathed more freely as he listened to this explanation, and he apologetically said:

"You must make allowances for my natural excitement, Hester, when I learned that another man has the right to claim you in your new character. Since he is so far away, the entanglement does not much matter, for I will have you safely wedded to me before he can interfere. In two months from this time I shall follow you to Louisiana, and I shall expect to claim you for my wife immediately after my arrival at Le Bocage."

"We must pay some respect to my father's memory—say six months, and I will consent; but you can visit me in the interval, if you choose."

"Of course I shall choose to do so, for life away from you will be flat and wearisome. If you really love me as you have led me to suppose, you will not refuse my prayer for an early marriage when we are again reunited. Hester, if you should be tempted to play me false after all that has passed between us, I believe that I should kill you."

"I shall not allow you the chance," she said, with a smile, the meaning of which he was far from interpreting. He accepted her words literally, and gratefully said:

"Thank you, dearest, for reassuring me thus."

Mrs. Blake here impatiently interrupted them:

"I think you had better find a more appropriate time for settling lovers' quarrels; this stranger will think we are treating him very unceremoniously, keeping him waiting so long in the yard. Go in, Hester, and prepare yourself to receive him; I have no fear as to the result. You are truly Miss Landry, and it will not be difficult to sustain the part that of right belongs to you."

Thus admonished, Hester returned to the outer room, threw over her head a shawl of costly black lace, which she took from the trunk, and prepared to receive her visitor. The room was small and dark, being lighted by only one window thickly covered with trailing vines, and she sat down with her back to this, and awaited the approach of Spencer.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

—The destinies of a nation depend less on the greatness of the few than the virtues or vices of the many. Eminent individuals cast further the features of her glory or shame; but the realities of her weal or woe lie deep in the great mass. The curling tops of lofty waves are the crests of the ocean, but from its depths flows the overpowering strength of its tides.

WIT AND HUMOR.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN used to say that the best story he ever heard of himself was this, which he overheard one night in a car. Two Quakeresses who sat in the seat in front of him were discussing the probable end of the war, one of whom remarked, "I think that Jefferson [meaning Jeff. Davis] will succeed." "Why does thee think so?" asked the other. "Because Jefferson is a praying man." "And so is Abraham," replied the second. "Yes; but the Lord will think Abraham is joking," was the conclusive reply.

"WHAT a nuisance!" exclaimed a gentleman at a concert, as a young fop in front of him kept talking in a loud voice to a lady at his side. "Did you refer to *me*, sir?" threateningly demanded the fop. "O no; I meant the musicians there, who keep up such a noise with their instruments that I can't hear your conversation," was the stinging reply.

"SEE there!" exclaimed a man who had just had a contest with a fleeing burglar, to a gaping crowd, as he pointed with some pride and a good deal of nervousness to a bullet hole through the crown of his hat. "Look at that hole, will you? You see that if this had been a low-crowned hat, I should have been killed outright."

"Do you see the resemblance between the whipping of his wife by that man yonder, and the running of that chicken across the door-yard in front of them?" asked one passer-by of another. "I do not," was the reply. "That's strange," quoth the first speaker, "as it is plain enough that each is a foul proceeding!"

AN editor up North, who has a mania for gardening, having become disgusted with the lateness of the season, says, "In planting seeds, put each one in a pill-box, and wrap the box in cotton batting; and in setting out onions, put an overcoat on each onion, and a layer of hot bricks under the bed."

FIRST RUFFIAN—"Wot was I hup for, and wot 'ave I got? Well, I floor'd a woman, and took her watch, an' I've got two years an' 'ard work." *Second Ruffian*—"Hi! wy, *I* flung a woman out'n a top floor winder, an' I've got only three months." *First Ruffian*—"Ah, but then *she was yer own wife!*"

THE following composition has been turned out by an American scholar aged nine years: "A boy without a father is a norphan, without a mother a double orphan, but is oftenest without a grandfather or a grandmother and then he is a norphanist."

IN a station on the Old Colony railroad, the following notice is put up behind the stove: "When this fire don't suit you, please let some lady fix it that has never tried, because every one that *has* tried has always put it out."

A YOUNG lady seeking a situation saw an advertisement for some one to do light housekeeping, and wrote to the advertiser asking where the light-house was, and if there was any way of getting to shore on Sunday.

A BRIGHT little girl having been requested to write a sentence introducing the word carrion, offered the following as a triumphant success: "Bad children often carri-on in church when they ought to be quiet."

A NEBRASKA man, who was offered a dish of maccaroni soup in one of our city restaurants, the other day, indignantly refused it, saying, "I didn't come all the way to New York to feed on b'iled pipe-stems!"

IT is a phrase of the mariners to say that a swift sailing craft shows a clean pair of heels. The fastest of tugs, however, does not come under this line of compliment, as it has only tows to show.

AT Trebizond, Madame Coralia Volanti has created a perfect *furore* by her extraordinary performances on the high rope. Hence she is called a high-strung as well as a courageous woman.

IT has been discovered that the distinguishing difference between a summer dress in winter time and an extracted tooth, is, that the former is too thin and the latter tooth out.

SOME of the public lands given to the Wyoming school fund have been put up for distribution by lottery, which is not unprecedented, as land is often sold by lots.

IT is a curious fact that poor people, though sometimes given to stealing, are never afflicted with kleptomania. It takes a rich person to have that disease.

"BABIES taken and finished in ten minutes" is the announcement of a Western photographer.

WHEN a ship hogs, of course she makes for the trough of the sea.

CURRENT ITEMS.

KILLED BY HER OWN LAWYER.—An old lady in Toulon, France, whose husband was killed by a railroad explosion, while returning from the funeral of their son, who had been killed in battle, brought an action against the railroad company for damages. During the trial her counsel drew such a touching picture of the fate of her husband and son that she was taken ill, and died before the suit was finished.

A DETROIT man, in passing through Salt Lake City, thought he'd inquire about some mining stock in which he invested years before, and to his surprise found that it was worth two millions of dollars, and to his chagrin learned that his claim had been jumped, and passed through many hands, and was so tangled up that he stood no chance of ever getting it back or realizing anything for it.

A HEROIC WOMAN.—The Lewiston, Me., *Journal* says, "A lady belonging in Oxford county, sixty years of age, has been working in one of the mills the past winter to earn money to pay for wintering the farm stock. Last fall the stock could not be sold, and rather than see them starve, the energetic lady went to work in one of our mills, and has earned enough to save the stock."

GEORGE CHASE of Hopkinton, N. H., went fishing the other day, and seeing a black-snake about six feet in length, drove him up a tree, and then laid siege to him with stones. This condition of things lasted a short time, and then his snakeship concluded to make a sally, and charged down the tree, actually driving his besieger several rods, but he soon rallied, and finally killed the snake.

A WOMAN leading a little child by the hand attempted to get on a train of cars as it was leaving Elizabeth recently, but failed, and was only kept from falling under the train by the presence of mind of a gentleman, who seized her and drew her on the platform. The woman exhibited her gratitude by calling the gentleman names, and threatening to slap his face.

A SHOCKING affair occurred in the town of New Scotland, New York, on the 11th of last month. A family consisting of Mr. Volmer, his wife and five children, Volmer's mother, and his wife's father, occupied a two-story building, which took fire. Volmer, his wife and one child, who occupied the first floor, escaped. All the others perished in the flames.

DURING a thunder-storm, a cat, lying under a stove in the house of a farmer near Lewisburg, Ky., was killed by lightning. Four persons were seated near the stove, none of whom was hurt, though all were slightly shocked. In its passage through the room the electric fluid resembled a globe of fire.

AS a drove of Texas cattle was passing through Southborough, near Boston, a wild steer started on the rampage, scattered people right and left, and finally taking after one of the Selectmen of the place, ran him down, and gored him so terribly that the man died in about forty-eight hours.

A PROSPEROUS BEGGAR.—The Milwaukee *Sentinel* says that a street beggar in that city, who was bribed to show his day's earnings, counted out twenty dollars and forty-seven cents, and did not consider it a very good day, after all.

A LADY, with a babe in her arms, fell down stairs, in Baltimore, on Tuesday morning of last week, and bending all her powers to the protection of her babe, she succeeded in saving it unharmed, but was fatally injured herself.

THE burned district of Chicago now abounds in half dead-and-alive trees, the sides which fronted the fire being dead and black from the roots up, while the opposite sides are full of sap, and the branches green with leaves.

THE prizes offered in the Boston public schools for the best essay on the prevention of cruelty to animals were, without one exception, taken by girls, although the boys are, on an average, older than the girls.

THE students of Amherst College, by a special dispensation of the faculty, are to be permitted to attend a dancing school. Some time ago the young men asked for this privilege, and were refused.

FORTY-SEVEN thousand persons die annually of consumption in Great Britain; a disease which the London *Telegraph* calls "a scourge, compared to which cholera is a jest and war a diversion."

A YOUNG man and woman of Carrollton, Miss., died recently on the day appointed for their marriage, and both of the same fever.

OLD SCHOOL-MATES.

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

Guess who you are, shall I? No, Mollie, not I.
Why, my dear, precious school-mate, the love in your eye
Betrays you at once; neither time nor old-age
Can rob your warm heart of life's best heritage.

But come, my dear friend, take my own easy-chair,
It will do my eyes good to see *you* resting there;
We will live once again in life's rollicking Spring,
And grim care and sorrow to the winds we will fling.

But how strangely you look with that cap on your head!
And your crown's like a garden that's been newly wed!
Why, what has become of that net-work of curls,
The snare of the boys' hearts—the envy of girls?

And that sober gray cape hides a neck once so fair—
To be sure it may give quite a matronly air;
But still, *I* prefer those bewildering ties
Of rainbow-hued ribbon that charmed our young eyes.

What possible use can you have for that bag
That wags at your side, like a broken-down nag?
It would be a good joke, now, if I should peep in,
And find glasses and snuff-box for *old* folks within.

And where are the dimples that played hide and seek
With the blush that would flit to and fro on your cheek?
Ah! crow's-feet branching out from both eyes, to be sure—
From *Mollie's* eyes, who never could *wrinkles* endure!

There's the same winning smile, and the same rows of "pearls,"
That excited my envy when we were both girls!
"Cost two hundred dollars!"—Dear me, what a child!
But then you were always a trifle too wild!

What! up to your old, playful tricks? I must laugh
To see Mollie again strutting 'round with a staff!
Thump, thump, like a soldier with one wooden leg—
Making light of misfortune! Don't, Mollie, I beg.

"Forty years since we parted, two light-hearted maids!"
And you *need* all these helps, as a General his aids?
And you didn't know me, but thought my sweet May—
My daughter, named for you—your school-friend to-day!

Dear me, how time flies! It seems but a day,
Since two merry young girls started out on life's way!
Forty years with their lights and their shadows have passed,
And two crooning old women we meet now, at last!

We note in each other the changes time brings—
The vanishing youth, to which each fondly clings;
We count up the years by the lambs of each fold,
And we own at the last that we are GROWING OLD.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "SELF-MADE," "THE BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER CXXII.

ONE SINGLE WITNESS.

> This is all true as it is strange:
> Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth
> To the end of reckoning. SHAKESPEARE.

Every one arose and looked around, to catch sight of the expected witness.

But no one was so much affected as the accused. He started to his feet on first hearing the name of Craven Kyte, and then dropped back into his chair, pale as marble.

Evidently he had not expected to hear this man called.

In the mean time a little bustle was heard in the bottom of the hall, as of some one pushing his way through the crowd.

And presently Craven Kyte, pale, calm, handsome, and well dressed in clerical black, came forward and entered the witness box.

He bowed to the presiding judge, and stood ready to give in his testimony.

All eyes within range of them turned constantly from the witness on the stand to the prisoner at the bar.

The two men were perfect duplicates of each other.

The oath was administered to the witness.

Mr. Berners conducted the examination.

"Please to state your name and age, the place of your nativity, and all you know of the marriage performed at the Church of St. ——, in the city of Philadelphia, on the fifteenth day of September last, between the hours of twelve and one P. M.," said the counsel.

"My name is Craven Kyte. I am a native of this town. I am twenty-three years of age. I know Mrs. Mary Grey, one of the parties to this marriage. I was engaged to be married to her. On the evening of the fourteenth of September I arrived in Philadelphia, having followed her there at her request. On the morning of the fifteenth I met her by appointment at the Art Gallery of Bertue, Brothers. It was arranged that we should be married on that day. I took a cab and we entered it. At her suggestion I directed the driver to take us to the rectory of the Rev. Mr. Borden. As we drove along, she proposed that I should marry her under the name of Alden Lytton."

At these words of the witness there was an immense sensation in the court, breaking forth into murmurs of astonishment and indignation, so that the judge arose in his place and said that order must be observed, or he should be obliged to command the clearing of the court room.

His words produced the proper effect, and the spectators became "as still as mice."

The examination of the witness was resumed.

"You say that Mrs. Mary Grey proposed that you should marry her in the name of Mr. Alden Lytton?"

"Yes. I was very much astonished at the proposal, and expostulated with her about it, but she was in earnest, and at last she made it an absolute condition of my ever getting her at all, that I should marry her under the name of Alden Lytton."

"What reason did she give for this singular request?"

"She said she only wanted to play a harmless practical joke upon Miss Cavendish, the betrothed of Mr. Lytton."

"But her joke was so deep and earnest that she made it the only condition upon which she would marry you at all, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"And did you comply with that condition?"

"Yes, sir. Sooner than lose her, I complied with that wicked condition. It did not seem wicked to me then. It only seemed foolish and purposeless. And besides, I firmly believe I was half crazy at that time."

"Quite likely," said Mr. Berners dryly. "What followed?"

"Well, sir, and gentlemen, we drove to the rectory. She took a blank card out of her pocket and with a pencil wrote Mr. Alden Lytton's name on it, and told me to send that in to the rector as if it were my own. When I looked at the name on the card, I exclaimed how much it looked like Mr. Lytton's own handwriting. And she said, so much the better."

Again, at these words, a murmur of indignation ran through the court room, which was, however, instantly suppressed, as every one wished to hear every word uttered by this witness.

He continued:

"I rang the bell at the rectory, and sent that card in by the servant who came to open the door. Presently I was invited into the rector's study. He addressed me as Mr. Lytton, and wanted to know how he could serve me. Then I told him what I had come for. And he consented to perform the marriage ceremony, but said that he must do it in the church, which was just next door to the rectory. I went back to the carriage for Mary—"

"Meaning Mrs. Grey?"

"Yes. But I called her 'Mary' then. I went back for her, and brought her into the church, where, under the name of Alden Lytton, I was married to Mary Grey by the Rev. Mr. Borden, in the presence of John Martin, sexton of the parish, and of Sarah Martin, his daughter. A marriage certificate, signed by the minister and the witnesses, was then given to Mrs. Grey."

"What happened next?"

"At her request I drove her back to the Blank House, where she had been stopping. She got out at the corner of the street, however, and walked to the house, while I waited in a neighboring reading-room for her return. After an hour's absence she came back, and we drove to the 'Asterick,' where I had engaged rooms for us both. But she declined staying in town any time, and expressed a wish to go to Havre de Grace. So we only stopped at the 'Asterick' long enough to pay my bill and gather up my effects, and then we took the train for Havre de Grace, where we arrived the same afternoon."

Here the witness suddenly became so much agitated that he could not go on for some moments.

Mr. Denham brought him a glass of water. He drank, and seemed somewhat revived.

"Tell us what occurred at Havre de Grace."

"We took rooms at the 'Star,' had tea there, and after tea she proposed to take a walk down by the water side, as the evening was so delightful. When we had walked a while, she proposed that we should hire a boat and go rowing. I objected, being but an indifferent oarsman. But she insisted, declaring that she had been brought up on the water side, and could row like a squaw and swim like a fish. I was her slave, and I obeyed her. We hired the boat of her choice—a mere shell of a boat—"

Here the judge, who had been growing a little impatient, inquired of the counsel for the defence:

"Pray, Mr. Berners, what has all this about the boat to do with the case on trial?"

"It has a great deal to do with it, your Honor, as tending to prove that this woman had a deep design upon the peace and honor of the gentleman whom she claims as her husband, and that she did not hesitate at any crime to carry out that design to a successful issue," respectfully replied the counsel.

"Let the witness proceed then," said the judge.

"What happened next?" inquired Mr. Denham.

"Murder happened next—at least an attempt at murder. We got into the little shell of a boat, and I took the oars and rowed out into the river and down with the tide. We rowed about for more than two hours. It grew very dark, and I then wished to come in; but she objected, and asked me to row around a certain point that I saw dimly down the river. I rowed to the point and around it, when suddenly she made an exclamation that her hat had fallen into the water, and she begged me to get it for her. It floated about three feet from the side of the boat. I drew in my oars and secured them, and then leaned over the side of the boat and reached out my hand to get the hat, which was floating further off. I had to lean so far over, and stretch my hand so far out, that it was as much as ever I could do to keep my balance. But just as I touched the hat, she gave me a sudden and violent push from behind, and sent me into the water."

At this a murmur of horror and indignation passed through the court room. And on this occasion no one attempted to enforce silence.

But soon the deep interest of the audience in the story of the witness, closed their lips and opened their ears again, and they became silent and attentive.

"Do you mean to say that Mrs. Grey pushed you into the water purposely?" inquired Mr. Denham.

"Yes, sir. She could not have done it accidentally. She waited until I had leaned so far over that the least jar might have made me lose my balance; and then suddenly, with all her strength, she pushed me, and I dropped into the water, and sunk like so much lead. I could not swim at all. Twice, in my struggles for life, I rose to the surface, and cried for help. Both times I saw her boat whirling round and round, from the impetus given it by the violence with which she had pushed me over. The second time I sank I lost my senses. When I recovered them, I found myself stretched out on the deck of a collier, with several people rubbing and rolling me. But I was weak in all my limbs, and sorely confused in my head."

"Witness, can you not shorten this?" inquired the Judge.

"Yes, your Honor, I can shorten it, if they will permit me. The schooner that picked me up was the 'Sally Ann,' trading from Havre de Grace and other coal depots to Washington and Georgetown. They were outward bound then, and as I could give no account of myself, being so nearly dead, they took me along with them. They carried me to Washington, where I lay ill in the free ward of the Samaritan Hospital, under the care of the good Sisters of Mercy, for two months. When I recovered sufficiently to know where I was, I found out that I had been registered there under the name of Albert Little. I don't know how that happened, but I suppose somebody must have found in my pocket the card with Alden Lytton written upon it, and perhaps blotted with the river water, and had misread it Albert Little. But that is only a conjecture."

"Confine yourself to facts, witness, and leave conjectures," said the Judge.

"Well, your Honor, the fact then was that my name was registered Albert Little, however it came to be done. I did not care to set the good Sisters right about my name, and so I let the matter go. As soon as I was able to write, and before I was able to walk, I wrote to my senior partner, Mr. Bastiennelli, a private and confidential letter, asking him to come and visit me at the hospital, and to inquire there for one Albert Little. Mr. Bastiennelli, who had suffered great anxiety on the subject of my long protracted and unaccountable absence, came at once to see me. I told him of everything that had befallen me, especially as to Mary Grey's insisting on my marrying her under the name of Alden Lytton, and afterward attempting to get rid of me by murder. He was dreadfully shocked, of course, but in a subsequent conversation with me, suggested that Mrs. Grey had some ultimate purpose in the perpetration of these crimes, and he advised me to lie perdue for a while until we should see what her purpose was, and foil her in it. Some days afterward he proposed that I should take a commission from him to go and purchase goods for him in Europe. As soon as I was able to travel I left the country on this business. I was absent several months, and only arrived in my native country five days ago. On the day after my landing at New York, in looking over some files of newspapers, I read the advertisements for me. I guessed at once that I was wanted for business connected with the secret of my own life, and so I packed up and took the first train to Washington, and the next boat to Richmond, and the train to Wendover, without stopping an hour on my journey. I reached this place at noon to-day; found the town full of people, as if a fair or a festival was going on; asked what was the matter, and was told about this trial. Of course then I had the key to Mary Grey's mysterious crime, and I knew where I was wanted. I came at once to the court, wrote my name on a card and sent it in to Mr. Lytton's junior counsel, who came out to meet me and brought me here."

"That will do, Mr. Kyte. Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the testimony of our witness, the only and all-sufficient witness for the defence; but we will recall one who appeared here as the most important witness for the prosecution. The Rev. Mr. Borden will please to take the stand once more," said Mr. Berners.

The Rector of St. —— came forward and took his place in the witness box.

"Mr. Borden, will you be so good as to look at these two gentlemen and tell me, upon your oath, which of them you married to Mrs. Mary Grey?" politely requested Mr. Berners.

The rector looked from Alden Lytton to Craven Kyte, and from Craven Kyte back to Alden Lytton. And his face paled and flushed, as he exclaimed:

"May the Lord of Heaven forgive me, for I have made an awful mistake! It was *that* gentleman whom I married to Mrs. Grey." And he pointed straight at Craven Kyte.

A murmur of great excitement passed through the court room.

"A while ago you swore it was the other man," said Mr. Desmond, with an ugly sneer.

"So I did! May Heaven forgive me for the awful, though unconscious perjury! for so I thought with all my judgment until I saw this last man. And certainly they are perfect duplicates of each other. Any one under the same circumstances might have made the same mistake," meekly replied the minister.

And certainly every one who saw and compared the two men agreed with the last speaker.

"Will you be so good, reverend sir, as to explain by what test you *now* know these perfect duplicates, the one from the other, and are enabled to identify the particular one whom you married to Mrs. Grey on the fifteenth of the last September?"

"Certainly, sir. I can distinguish them by a certain indefinable difference which I can perceive while I see them together, but which I might fail to perceive if they were apart from each other. Also I can identify this last man, who calls himself Craven Kyte, by that small mark or scar that he bears on his temple near the corner of his left eye. I noticed it at the time I performed the marriage ceremony, but I thought it was a fresh scar. And I never remembered it at all when called upon to identify Mr. Alden Lytton, or indeed until I saw it again upon Mr. Craven Kyte."

"That will do," said Mr. Desmond. And the minister was allowed to retire.

John and Sarah Martin were recalled in succession, and each, when confronted with the two men, recanted from their late testimony, and swore pointedly to the person of Craven Kyte as the man whom they saw married to Mary Grey.

At this point the foreman of the jury arose in his place and asked permission of the bench to render their verdict at once, as they had all quite made up their minds upon the case.

After a few moments' consultation, the requested permission was given, and the jury, without leaving their seats, rendered their verdict of

"NOT GUILTY."

The accused was formally discharged from custody. And then the Judge did an almost unprecedented thing. He adjourned the court, came down from the bench, and warmly shook hands with Mr. Lytton, congratulating him upon his complete vindication.

And friends crowded around him, rejoicing with him in hearty sympathy.

Among them came Craven Kyte, saying, as soon as he got a chance to speak:

"Mr. Lytton, I have come to implore your pardon for the great wrong I unconsciously did you. Heaven knows I never meant it!"

"I do not believe that you ever did," said Alden Lytton, kindly taking his hand.

"I was mad and blind. She told me it was only to be a practical joke, and made it the only condition of our marriage, and I complied because I was her slave," continued Craven Kyte, not very clearly.

"Say no more about it. Forget it all as fast as you can. *I* shall," answered Alden, gently pressing and relinquishing the hand that he had held.

"Your carriage waits, my dear Lytton. And I am sure you are anxious to get back to Blue Cliffs and be the first to convey this good news to your wife," said Mr. Lyle, with a view to help Alden to get rid of his well-meaning but troublesome friends, who, in the earnestness of their sympathy with his triumph, forgot they were keeping him from her whom his soul most longed to meet.

Friends took the gentle hint, shook hands with him and released him.

And very soon Alden Lytton, with Mr. Lyle and Laura, were on their way to Blue Cliffs.

As the carriage rolled into the yard, Emma ran down the steps, her face radiant with joy, to meet the beloved husband from whom she had been separated for so many weeks under such trying circumstances, and whose face she had been the first to see through the glass windows of the carriage.

A moment more and they were locked in each other's arms, fervently thanking Heaven for their happy reunion.

Later that evening, the six friends were all assembled together in the drawing-room.

John Lytton and Charley, who were the guests of the house for the night, had just bid them good-night and retired to their room.

And then and there two little confessions were made.

Alden Lytton related the whole history of his foolish boyish love for the fascinating and unprincipled widow who had so nearly effected his destruction.

Emma listened in full sympathy, with his hand clasped in hers; and no retrospective jealousy disturbed the serenity of her loving and trusting spirit.

And at the close of the story she silently raised his hand and pressed it to her heart. That was her only comment. And the subject was never afterward mentioned between the two.

Then it was that Joseph Brent made his identity known to Alden Lytton, Emma and Laura, as it had long been known to Mr. Lyle his friend, and to Electra his wife. And Emma and Laura wept anew over the long past sorrows of poor Victor Hartman.

Alden grasped his hand in earnest gratitude and friendship.

"And it is to *you*," he said, "that my sister and myself owe all our present happiness. You thought for us, planned for us, toiled for us, made us even as your own children, simply because you were falsely accused of having made us fatherless!" he said, as the generous tears filled his eyes.

"I did all this because, but for the mercy of Heaven, a mad blow of mine *might* have made you fatherless, as it nearly did," answered Victor Hartman.

"Do you know who really struck the fatal blow, and why it was struck?"

"No; I know neither one nor the other."

"Then you shall learn, for now is the time to speak," said Alden Lytton.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LANCET'S PRESCRIPTION.

Dr. Lancet was a blunt old fellow, and an excellent physician; and he never drove around an obstacle when there was need of going through it.

Matilda Jane had just come home from boarding-school, and was not feeling well. She was troubled with a rushing of blood to the head; with dizziness; and with loss of appetite. In this condition she called in Dr. Lancet, and asked him if he could help her.

"I have been trying to doctor myself," she said, languidly, and with a faint, fluttering smile, as the old physician felt her pulse.

"What have you been doing?"

"Well—I have taken Limpshin's Sarsaparilla, and Knave's Anodyne, and Hummer's Pills, and Numhead's Balsam, and Fooler's Tonic, and the Nonesuch Expectorating Cordial, and Dr. Flathead's Universal Vivifying Recuperator,—and—and—"

"Goodness mercy!" gasped the doctor,—"and haven't any of these things given you relief?"

"No," replied the pining fair one,—"they have not helped me at all. O, dear Doctor, what *can* I take that will be sure to do me good?"

"What can you *take*?" repeated the old man, moving back, and eyeing her from head to foot. "*Take?*" he exclaimed, with a flash from beneath his shaggy brows. "My dear girl, *take off your corsets!*"

C.

A LONDONER'S DAY WITH THE BENNETTS.

Soon after my arrival in the American Metropolis, I hastened to present a letter of introduction from the London Correspondent of the *Herald* to his chief. The bookkeeper at the Brevoort House, where I was stopping, called a comfortable Clarence and bade the man drive to Fort Washington. Upon arriving at the Bennett mansion, after an amusing drive over progressing Boulevards, I was told that the family had not tenanted it for two years, in consequence of the improvements in Boulevarding and excavating all about it having made the inmates liable to fever and ague. Under most circumstances I would have been disgusted, that so long a ride proved purposeless. But the circuit through Central Park, and around the metropolitan outskirts—albeit there was a curious newness, if not rawness all along the drives—had been novel; and the saunter I had (while Jarvey baited the horses) around the Fort Washington premises amply recompensed the disappointment. The house was much like an English villa. The view from the piazza was to me enchanting. The wide river rolled a few hundred feet below. I visited the stables and yards. I found a beautiful Arabian that had been presented by the unfortunate Theodore, King of Abyssinia, to the *Herald* war correspondent, and by him brought home to young Mr. BENNETT, who is a most fearless and dashing rider. The stock cattle had been purchased in Jersey islands by this gentleman, when on a yacht cruise through British channels. There was a curious octagon building hard by, that based upon a bowling alley, culminated in a look-out cupola, and had a conversation gallery, and billiard room sandwiched in between. The conservatory was simply immense, and its products of rare flowers, grapes and wall fruit must be immense, and figure deliciously at those princely entertainments that the young editor constantly originates, either as surprises to intimate friends, or in the regular way, at his town house, or at the numerous club-houses, in which he is so pleasant a member-associate. The alternations of lawn, timber land, garden, parterre, meadow and crag spots, which make up the Bennett domain of fifty acres, were exceedingly pleasing.

"A tidy place, sur, and valuable as Wall street," said the jarvey, as I took my seat to go back. "I've heard, sur, that it's cost him only about $80,000, and it's $500,000 it would sell for this minnit."

This statement I afterward learned to be perfectly correct; so great has been the increase of land values in that vicinity.

When I reached the crowded city it was too late to present myself at the Fifth Avenue mansion. Upon the next day I drove first to the *Herald* office, so well known as the marble corner, which fronts the old St. Paul's church, and is elbowed by the railway horse cars that seem eternally abutting each other, or constantly threatening (but never doing it) to kill one pedestrian every second of time. As I entered the business premises, a civil policeman stood at the door, and to him I stated my nationality and objective points of curiosity. These he hastened to satisfy. I was shown the little desks which are devoted to the use of advertisers. Busy groups were around these. Brokers and laborers, ladies and servants, clerks and farmers, old and young, were arranging their composition of advertisements in this great Exchange of Information, or sorting and reading the letters of reply. Why the groups were there, and what they wanted, or were doing, the morning issue told me. That day fifty-four columns of advertisements had appeared. Each column averaged two hundred and forty lines. Each line averaged sixty cents. Therefore the gross daily income from the day's advertisements was close upon eight thousand dollars—or at the rate of three millions of dollars per annum!

Next I was shown the busy clerks behind the neat partitions, who were—according to tally of duty—receiving, checking, booking and receipting. The post-office boxes for the receipt of answers to advertisements were being constantly depleted and filled during the minutes I remained staring at this and other of the machinery for exchanging information.

Although I next visited the press-rooms, where the steel thunderers did their part, as well as the composing and distributing rooms, high up in quarters overlooking all the city, indeed with a view far out seaward—significant and appropriate location, that, for the beehive of printers—yet, as I am narrating not so much about the mechanical as the mental and personal surroundings of the *Herald*, those digressive visits are not now chronicled.

Again reaching the basement, I proceeded up a spiral staircase opening on Ann street. At the top stair the policeman guide handed me over to a bright and agile quadroon boy, who, hearing from whom my credentials emanated, at once pushed me through a knot of waiting guests into the reportorial apartments. These are partitioned rooms, conveniently but not ornately furnished. They were some fifteen in number. Each one was occupied. In the first, two reporters were collating and preparing shipping news. (The *Herald* is the only daily that gives any perfect account of this specialty—oddly enough for a large commercial metropolis.) In another room European files were being searched over with pencil or scissors for *quere* memoranda, or as suggestive reminders to the chiefs, or for extracts. Similar attention was being paid in a third apartment to the domestic files that were counted by the hundreds; and the young gentleman who emerged his head from the pile of gazettes around him suggested a monument to the enormous issue of American journals. Adjoining him was the room of the dramatic and musical reporter. Near to the latter the librarian and bookmarker was engaged.—It is no small job in a large newspaper establishment to make up the daily index to the paper even, letting alone the sifting of the magazines and books which publishers and authors avalanche upon the diurnal.—Other rooms were tenanted by legal, or police, or political, or miscellaneous reporters, and news detectives—pointers and setters after items, which have to be sifted in the largest room of all, that is devoted to the city editor and his immediate assistants. Passing from these apartments, my guide ushered me into the sanctum of the junior Mr. BENNETT, who was, however, absent. Here I found a knob bell telegraph, which communicated throughout the building, and could instantly summon the desired subordinate. Beside it was the office battery and finger-board of an electric telegraph, whose wires ran into the boudoir of the editor's house four miles away, and really made the two distant rooms adjoin. Here also was the *Herald* library of reference—admirably selected, carefully expurgated of trash, and then arranged for the most ready examination. This library was the pruned growth of a quarter century. The table of the young editor, in the centre of the apartment, presented that appearance of orderly confusion which so puzzles many women, but delights the student. In a corner of the room sat the private secretary, immersed in epistles, and fortified in his position by letter-files or scrap-books. Upon the wall hung a model of the famous yacht *Henrietta*, (the predecessor of *Sir Dauntless*,) and which I had seen at Cowes in 1867. Also the presentation resolutions of the Corporation of New York, tendering Commodore BENNETT the freedom of the city, in consideration of his gallantry and pluck during the ocean voyages. The next apartment was devoted to the *Herald* consulting editors of the day, and at evening to the night knights who see the big baby of a newspaper put to bed between his sheets.

But the chamber beyond—large, beautifully frescoed, airy, commodious, and artistically furnished—was the room of all rooms most interesting to enter and survey. Was it not the very temple to public opinion? Originally the room of Mr. BENNETT senior, it is now what *Herald* attachés call the Senate Chamber. At yonder table, surrounded with capacious library chairs, and dotted with inkstands or decorated with stationery, sit every day, between the hours of eleven and one o'clock, the working editorial staff for an interchange of views, discussions of policy and mutual mental contribution. The presiding chair is usually taken by young Mr. BENNETT, or in his absence by one of the three seniors of the staff, in alternation of days. The talk about the board is free and unrestrained, but always to some practical point for instruction of *Herald* readers. There is a full exchange here of intellectual wares purveyed from mental store-houses and binns of note-books. Questions of policy in management, and of mode of treating all subjects, are adjudicated by young Mr. BENNETT, if he is present, and in grave instances, should he be absent, he is communicated with upon mooted or discussable matters by telegraphic cipher, no matter where he may be. Sometimes the drafts of editorials are submitted to the Senate; at other times full articles are carefully read, for respective additions, amendment, revision, or even suppression. The staff talk and work together harmoniously, and for the common purpose of success. The aim is to make an impersonal paper; to avoid mediocrity of style, slovenliness of expression, or diffuseness, and to make news available through copious comment, apt illustration and ready explanation.

While thus occupied in looking about me, the neat and piquant colored boy accosted me with information that Mr. BENNETT's coupé was at the door, and that, as its owner had left previously with a friend, it would take me to the Fifth Avenue mansion. This coupé I found, on occupying its comfortable seat, to be essentially an Editor's. Pockets for books, pamphlets, newspapers and letters were around all the sides. Some of these were partially filled. One pocket was devoted to note paper, cards and pencils. A favorite precept of the elder BENNETT for journalists being, "Accumulate hints, suggestions, under all circumstances and in every place, and make notes of them while the news or ideas are heated in the brain."

The Fifth Avenue residence of the Editors BENNETT is one of the most commodious and distinguished looking in New York. The entrances suggest the liberal hospitality for which they are so famous. Their breakfast and dinner parties are of almost daily occurrence; and the guests are always representative gentlemen in professional and society life. It is well understood that the mere politician never tastes the BENNETT claret and olives. The tastefully decorated reception-room on the right as one enters the house, is the place wherein Mr. BENNETT junior receives his newspaper scouts, his editors and reporters. The windows were refreshingly garnished with flowers, exotics and rare plants from the Fort Washington ample conservatories. The parlors were uncarpeted, their floors being of variegated woods covered in spots with elegant rugs. Marine views of still or stormy ocean life, and yachting contests, were scattered around, and evidenced the aquatic taste of the owner, and his delight in the best of pictures—subjects that are so difficult to paint well. In the dining-room the table and sideboard furnitures gave further evidence of exquisite taste. Here is a life-like marble bust of the elder BENNETT. Ushered through the wide and pleasantly tiled hall, and up a liberally extended walnut winding staircase to the second story, I was next presented to the elder BENNETT. He was in his dressing-room. Over his bed hung a full length portrait of him, painted some fifteen years ago.

He had complimented President Grant and Miss Nilsson by hanging over the mantel their own portraits, which they had respectively presented to him. The old gentleman presented a hearty and ruddy face, and an unaffectedly pleasant greeting, as I was made known. Tall and gaunt, and with long, thick white hair and an exuberant white beard, large head, expansive brow, and the characteristic Roman nose, he presented the appearance of an ancient philosopher. This idea was aided by his long and ample dressing-gown of grayish cassimere. Muscular rheumatism—contracted at his rural residence—interferes with his love of exercise, and former agility of movements; but not with his general health or mental vigor. His valet preceded us into his boudoir, where we took seats. One would say at once, upon viewing it, this is the retreat of a literary man, and one who loves the beautiful. A bust of Farragut was on the *étagère*, but almost smothered in a heap of magazines and recently published books. Over it hung the oil painting of a liberated slave, who sat upon the sandy beach that skirted Fort Sumter, and was playing the banjo to some uncouth improvised song of liberty. It was a historical picture, and full of pathos and poetry. The walls were alternated with silk hangings, pictures and prints, which two large mirrors seemed to duplicate. A large table in the centre was heaped with newspapers; and not far off were files of all the daily and weekly journals.

I had heard that the Senior Editor was in failing health, but his conversation belied it. He had all the feelings, and indulged in all the anticipations, of a young man. But he has always been essentially a man of progress. Usually the old are fond of reminiscence, and of lamenting a decadence in men and things—but Mr. BENNETT senior laughs at the idea of publishing recollections. To him experiences are like the stern lights of a ship—only good to irradiate the wake; his position is at the bow port-hole, looking ahead. The times to him shift too rapidly for consultations with mere experience. His idea is to heave the lead and constantly examine for new soundings. To him conservatism is holding on to, and believing in, whatever is, but only until something better comes along, and then instantly embracing that better thing. So he talked with me, not about yesterday, but of to-morrow and next year.

While we were conversing—he speaks slowly, measuredly, but with the precision of a journalist—his son came in from the afternoon ride. Like his father, he is tall and ruddy of face. But he speaks more energetically, and with such rapidity of thought and utterance that I would not like to be the stenographer to whom—as is his practice—he dictates editorials, or topics and heads for leaders. He is literally running over with the wine of full health and well-developed manhood. He puts to shame the thousand and one dyspeptic American editors of whom I have so often heard, and whose type Dickens put in Martin Chuzzlewit. He is thoroughly English and Continental in his love of athletism. He believes in the *mens sana in sano corpore*. Consequently, he is a thorough boxer and fencer; and his proficiency as pedestrian, equestrian, marksman and yachtsman is too well known to need more than reference at my hands. You see at once, therefore, how he has been enabled to withstand so much executive labor as devolves upon the head of such an immense establishment as the *Herald*. You observe in his eyes that he possesses great executive talent. His training for the post he fills was certainly thorough. I am told that there is no detail in printing-office, counting-room, reporters' chambers, and of editorial chairs, that he is not thoroughly conversant with. He is enabled to do so much of business, and yet have time for social enjoyments, and his pleasures of field and ocean, because he owns the knowledge, tact and ability to systematize. He has long ago put together his watch movements, oiled them, carefully and nicely adjusted the hair-spring; and now only needs to wind with his key of system, or (temporarily during absence) intrust it to some reliable subordinate, in order for the *Herald* time-piece of journalism to constantly beat with intellectual celerity and certainty.

A long conversation ensued between all of us—there was also another visitor—which of course should not be referred to. Suffice it to say, that after a pleasant dinner party, at which I met many magnates, I left the BENNETT mansion delighted with my impressions, and at every step of my walk to my Brevoort bedroom breaking the tenth commandment upon covetousness!

For surely, with such opportunities and responsibilities, such colossal and honorably acquired wealth, such nice tastes, varied pursuits, and great hopes for the future, as belong to the younger BENNETT, who is there in all America more to be envied, or more deserving to become the focus of observation?

—Man is the only creature endowed with the power of laughter: is he not also the only one that deserves to be laughed at?

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1872.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber unless he gives us his *former* as well as his present address.

OUR TERMS FOR 1872—NOW IS THE TIME TO SUBSCRIBE.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Postmasters and others who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterwards add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage. When a draft or money-order can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. The postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country is only twenty cents a year, or five cents a quarter, payable at the office where the paper is delivered.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

What Does that Present of a Million Dollars Mean?

It is announced that the city of New Haven has offered to the State of Connecticut the sum of one million dollars, as a present, to be used in the construction of a new State House.

The object is to secure the erection of the State House in New Haven instead of any other locality in the State. It seems to be entirely a matter of business calculation, and New Haven has concluded that it will be a good bargain—a profitable investment—for her to pay one million dollars for the State House.

What does this mean?

If the mere assembling of a Legislature in a town were to bring to it no more money than the legal pay of the members, that would hardly be sufficient to contribute essentially to the enriching of even a small village. But legislation has, unfortunately for the people, become a matter of purchase and sale, and it is now well understood that wherever the capitol of a State is located money will flow in like a river, during the sessions of the Legislature. And money contributed for such purposes is lavishly spent, a great part of it in dissipation and extravagant and immoral indulgences. Hence the privilege of having a State House located in a town becomes an object for pecuniary bids. It is of the nature of a license to set up a billiard saloon or to sell liquors.

Look at Albany. Look at Trenton. Look at the city of Washington. The very atmosphere of these cities reeks with the corrupt expenditure of money in procuring or preventing legislation.

We must have a reform in these things in some way. It is essential to the preservation of our liberties. The first step toward it is to make its necessity generally felt and realized; and we think that the bid of a million dollars for the location of a State House in a particular city is a very opportune occasion for calling public attention to the subject.

Too Late.

There are few words that have a more melancholy sound than the simple phrase *Too late*, in its application to many of the experiences of real life. A striking illustration of this is afforded by the circumstances attending the recent death, by drowning, of Mr. H. C. HARLEY of this city. The father of Mr. HARLEY, who resides at Albany, had been estranged from his son for a number of years, but, learning that the young man had retired from business and was about to visit Europe, he had sent him a letter, desiring a reconciliation, fearing that, as he was growing old and feeble, he might not live until his son's return.

The body of Mr. HARLEY floated ashore at Castleton, on the Hudson, and on his person was found an envelope containing his father's letter to him. It is supposed that he had taken a night boat from New York, and was on his way to respond to his father's invitation to a renewal of their friendship, when he fell overboard and was drowned.

The old gentleman was telegraphed to by the coroner, and was greatly overcome when he recognized the features of his son.

We remember a similar incident which occurred many years ago, and which impressed us deeply at the time. We happened to be brought in contact with a man who had lost a brother, from whom he had been for a short time estranged.

The brother was on board a steamboat which was burned, and he perished in the flames or in the water. The grief of the survivor was terrible, and we believe he never fully recovered from it.

Such occurrences preach a sermon to all. They are full of instruction. To-day is ours. To-morrow may not be. Avoid the harrowing reflection that you have postponed until it is "too late" that which ought to be done.

Anxious to be Hanged.

There is an old man, named JEREMIAH COLLINS, in prison at Albany, under sentence of death for the murder of his wife. Unlike most culprits similarly situated, he insists on the execution of his sentence. He insists upon it that his wife deserved to be killed, and at the same time he seems to think that he ought to be hanged. He objects to any commutation of his sentence, and expresses dissatisfaction with Gov. HOFFMAN for postponing his execution a few weeks. He was originally sentenced to be hanged on the 18th of May, but the Governor respited him to the 15th of July. When he was sentenced he requested the Judge to make the time as short as possible.

Ice-Houses and Lightning.

Lightning seems to be particularly attracted by ice-houses. Nearly every summer several are burnt along the Hudson River, from being struck. One was destroyed in this way a few days ago, at Kingston, containing ten or twelve thousand tons of ice. We never heard of a powder-mill being struck—perhaps, however, they blow up often enough without.

DAMNATORY PRAYERS.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

MR. BEECHER—*Dear Sir:* A short time ago, I heard a minister, while exhorting, relate the following story to the congregation. He said that in one of the Eastern States a certain minister had commenced a revival in a neighborhood which was controlled by infidels, that is, that all the influential men of the neighborhood were infidels, who would not attend church, and influenced others to stay away. After he had tried in vain to convert them, he prayed fervently that they might be removed. He said there were five of them, and that in a few days four were removed by death, and the other was "terribly shaken," as he expressed it. Now I wish to know, if you think the story true, whether it was right for him to pray for such a thing? Is there anything in the Bible in favor of such a course?

The story is very suspicious. It smells of the old monks' stories, by which it was tried to frighten people into goodness. We should be sorry to believe that any man in this age would do so foolish and wicked a thing as to pray for the destruction of those whom he could not subdue by his preaching, and we are entirely sure that such shocking and ignoble prayers would find no favor above.

It is one thing to point out the evil consequences of wrong courses, and to declare that the wages of sin is death, and quite another thing to invoke destruction upon the heads of unbelievers. The Sacred Scriptures point out the proper spirit of the preacher: "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if, peradventure, God shall give them repentance."

What a time there would be if every unsuccessful preacher should be justified in denouncing those who did not feel moved by his sermons! Broad as is the road that leads to destruction, it would have to be widened still more to take in all that would swarm it, if everybody was to be damned that poor preaching and unwise sermons did not convert.

We are not without a striking case bearing upon this subject in the history of our Lord. As he was approaching a village of the Samaritans, the villagers refused to receive him, inasmuch as he was on his way to Jerusalem. James and John, fiercely jealous of their Master's honor, asked, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" The Lord rebuked them, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." This was the very John whose name is a synonym of all gentleness and lovableness! That he was early subject to such bursts of cruel passion, all the more shows the nobleness of that growth which afterward took place in him.

Closely allied to this subject is the occasional instances which occur of weak men, called good, praying for the immediate interposition of God against those whom they regard as false teachers. Theodore Parker seems never to have gotten over the fact that a poor ignorant fellow, in one of the Boston morning prayer-meetings, prayed that God would convert him, or else remove him. Again and again Mr. Parker alluded to it, as if it was a fair exponent of the spirit of those who disliked his teachings; whereas it was one of those foolish utterances that occur in all free meetings, and it shocked the people present full as much as it could have done the gentleman concerned.

The policy of praying down our enemies or antagonists receives no countenance in Scripture, none in common-sense, none in charity. It is a piece of indecent folly, which should bring upon the criminal perpetrator of it, a rebuke which should speedily cure him of arrogating to himself the functions of Judge and Condemner.

GRANDMOTHERS.

A frivolous old-age! Can there be anything more dreadful? The inability to please, with an unabated desire to do so.

This was all expressed in a remark of a mother to her daughter when her first child was born. "Never teach it to call me grandmother." Oh! how I pity such a woman. Of all the lovely titles in the English language, it seems to me, that of "Grandmother" is the loveliest.

To have one's children's children at our knee; to tell them wonderful tales of their parents' childhood; to come between them and the harm of *too much governing*, which has ruined quite as many children as has too much indulgence; to show your zealous son or daughter, by the light of experience, that it is sometimes wisest not to see a fault, which, if seen, must be immediately corrected; to teach them that rebuke and punishment should both be reserved for great and grave occasions, and that the continual dropping of "scolding" for trifles is destruction to all good government—that for the wearer of a dirty little shoe to forget to wipe it on the door-mat, is not comparable to the offence of telling a lie.

In short, that the surface faults of most children will fall from off them like the calyx from flowers, in the due course of nature, without any of that irritating plucking and pulling which jars the young plant, and harms its healthful growth.

This I contend to be the delightful mission of a sensible grandmother. Grandmother! Who but she knows that there are times when a child can and ought to have a reprieve of an hour from "being put to bed;" and that always, before a child is punished, you should be sure to look and ascertain that its "tongue is not coated," or that it had no appetite for its breakfast at the breakfast hour, and needs a slice of bread and butter instead of "a whipping."

Grandmother, of all people, knows that in our pellmell rush through life, it is thus that we trample down the little children, of whom the dear loving Saviour said, "Suffer them to come unto me." FANNY FERN.

A Terrible Injustice.

FRANK BEANE, a lad sixteen years of age, was recently tried before the Supreme Court of Connecticut, on the charge of having placed obstructions on the Naugatuck Railroad track.

It turned out on the trial, by the testimony of all the witnesses for the prosecution, that instead of having placed the obstructions on the track, young BEANE simply removed some which had been put there by some one else, and thus saved an accident from an approaching train—quite a different act. BEANE had suffered fifteen months' imprisonment before his case came to trial.

It is said that corporations have no souls; but even a soulless corporation ought to have regard enough for public opinion to compensate this poor boy, so far as money can do it, for what he has undergone. There is no knowing what his act saved the Company, by preventing an accident.

Queer Subject for a Good Character.

A man in Westchester county was arrested on a charge of having threatened to hang his wife while he was in a state of intoxication. He not only made the threat, but actually undertook to carry it into execution. He took his wife to the barn, where he was going to hang her, when some of his neighbors rallied, and procuring the assistance of the police, prevented him. The wretch was let off with only forty days' imprisonment, *in consideration of his previous good character.*

A HANDSOME LEGACY.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

A Newfoundland dog might have done as much; and, as Paul Pentecute could swim like one, perhaps he didn't deserve much more credit. He had only jumped overboard, in a rough sea, and saved a young lady from drowning.

"And a mean dog he would have been *not* to do it," carps some dry-land critic, who never ventured into water in his life, save in a bath-tub.

Certainly, valiant sir; but you would have patted a dog on the head for doing it, wouldn't you?—instead of giving him a kick by way of reminder that he had done no more than his duty.

The merits of Paul's act might have been more generally acknowledged, had Kate Crombie been older and uglier. But when she emerged from the waves, supported in his arms, looking lovelier than Aphrodite in her 'teens, the hearts of half a dozen young dandies, each of whom vowed he was on the point of taking the leap himself when Paul so rudely cut in ahead, burned with envy.

Leaving them to burn, and Kate and Paul, in their present moist condition, to the privacy of their state-rooms, let us go back a little.

Kate Crombie was an orphan and an heiress, whose father, like Rosa Budd's, had "willed her away" in her cradle to the infant son and heir of a sworn friend of his, who reciprocated the bequest by a similar disposition of his boy baby in long clothes. And in time the two friends died, fully believing they had done a just thing, as though it were a fixed natural law, that inasmuch as *they* had dearly loved each other, their children must.

Kate had never seen her affianced since she could remember. That she was one day to marry him, she had accepted as a settled fact. She and her father had prattled of it when she was a child; and when he died, the engagement became, to her imagination, something sacred.

She had been sent to finish her education in Switzerland, and had finished it, and was on her return home, when a sudden lurch of the vessel threw her into the sea one day, and afforded Paul Pentecute the opportunity of saving her life, and making himself hated by a knot of foppish admirers who had been sheeps-eyeing Kate all the way from Liverpool.

Paul had been placed by his uncle and guardian as a clerk in the house of Dockboy and Wiggins, London, with a view to completing his mercantile training. And it was on his return, after several years of such service, that chance made him a fellow-passenger of Kate's.

He had not been indifferent to her beauty from the first, but had not intruded himself on her notice, as some others had, less backward or less delicate than himself. He had not even sought an introduction.

There was no time to wait for one the day he sprang over the ship's side and caught her in his arms, keeping her head above water till a boat came to their rescue, and after *that* none was needed.

At their first interview, Kate was free and unreserved. Her professions of gratitude were sincere and not overdone, while the charm and brilliancy of her conversation quite finished the conquest of Paul's heart, which her beauty had already well begun.

But after that, she suddenly grew reserved, if not cool, toward Paul; seemed to avoid him studiously, and rarely, by any chance, suffered their eyes to meet.

Paul moped and became miserable; and when some of the young fellows, whom envy had made malicious, twitted him on his evident good fortune, he looked as ill at ease as an owl in daylight beset by a mob of cat-birds.

They had arrived within a day of New York, and Paul, with the courage of desperation, resolved to know the worst; for *that* was what he anticipated.

He found Kate alone at last. Her eyes looked red and swollen, and her cheeks were flushed; but Paul was too agitated to observe closely. He rushed at once into the subject his heart was full of. In few, but strong words, he declared his passion, and, with equal energy, was proceeding to press his suit, when Kate looked up appealingly. Her face was pale as death. Her bloodless lips quivered.

"I cannot—must not hear more," she said, in a voice tremulous with emotion—"I am already bound to another."

Paul staggered as if from a blow.

"And now let us part forever, and part friends," she said, rising and extending her hand.

Paul clasped it eagerly, pressed it to his lips, and then released it. The next moment she was gone.

"I want you to pay a visit with me this evening," said Paul's uncle, not many days after his return.

Paul tried to excuse himself.

"Come, come! you're in the dumps, young man, and I know a cure for 'em—at least I *think* I do," said the old gentleman.

To oblige his uncle, Paul yielded.

In a stately mansion on Madison Avenue, Paul was introduced to a staid, elderly lady, who surveyed him a little critically, he thought.

"Is your niece at home?" inquired Paul's uncle, the usual commonplaces over, and just as Paul was beginning to wonder what his uncle's cure for the "dumps" might be.

"She will be down presently," said the lady.

Just then a young lady entered, at whose appearance Paul started, as at a spectre.

"Mr. Pentecute," said the aunt, introducing Paul. "My niece, Miss Crombie, Mr. Pentecute."

Kate raised her eyes with a quick inquiring look at her aunt, who answered with a nod that spread a mingled glow of pleasure and confusion over the young lady's face.

"It is I who ought to have introduced Mr. Pentecute," said Kate; "but I had not the pleasure of knowing his name before, though he is the same gentleman to whom I stand indebted for my life."

Of course Paul had to be thanked over again; and soon after the considerate aunt and uncle retired, for a cozy chat, to the library.

Kate's manner was a puzzle to Paul. It possessed all the freedom and captivating grace that had won him so completely at their first interview. There was withal a warmth of cordiality, something so *encouraging* in it, that in spite of their late tragic parting "forever," Paul was on the point of beginning where he had then left off.

"I am sorry, Mr. Pentecute, I didn't know your name before," said Kate.

"It's such a ridiculous one," said Paul, "that I never tell it unless obliged to."

"And yet it might have—"

"Changed your answer?" interrupted Paul. "If I thought so, I should esteem it the most illustrious name in the world!"

"You know I told you I was bound to another," resumed Kate.

What imprecation unseemly to a lady's ears Paul might have invoked on that other's head, had Kate given him time, there is no telling.

"I had never seen him," she continued, blushing, "and so could not know—"

"How utterly unworthy the villain is!" broke in Paul.

"That you and Paul Pentecute," said Kate, finishing her own sentence, "were one and the same person. He and I were *willed to each other*, you see."

Paul didn't wait for further explanation. He clasped Kate in his arms even more closely than he did the day he braved the sea to save her.

"Why did you never tell me about the wills, uncle?" said Paul, on their way homeward.

"Well, you see, young people are mighty apt to get skittish when you try to force 'em in love matters," replied the uncle; "so I thought it best to let things take their natural course."

And they did take it.

LOST OVERBOARD, BOY CALLED JOE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

"The bark Iris wrecked in a terrible blow.
Crew safe.—Lost overboard boy, known as Joe."

I cannot forget it, that shipping news scrap,
With its quickly told story of storm and mishap;

And the swift-ended life of the sailor boy gone,
Through the surge of the harbor adrift and alone.

I see, through shut eyelids, that vanishing face,
The bubbles that shudder at last o'er the place;

I see the rough hands, that like gulls flutter white,
Then waver and falter, and sink out of sight.

And I wonder, eyes tearful, if any one cried,
When they read about "Joe," and the way he had died;

If his mother were waiting in That Land, or This;
If he had to remember a blessing or kiss;

If the ship was his cradle and chapel and friend;
If his title were "Joe," from beginning to end;

If he never saw flowers, nor berries, nor birds,
Heard ever sweet music, or soft girlish words.

May be so—may be not. Sailor laddie, adieu!
There's an ocean wide rolling between me and you.

Good-bye, outward bound, little vanishing tar;
May your anchor ground safely quite over the bar.

Ah! the mysteries, Life and Transition, you know,
Though you were but a sailor boy, known here as Joe.

ORIGIN OF THE TERM LYNCH LAW.

In the infancy of nations, as in all newly constituted communities, the reign of law is anything but absolute. It only becomes sovereign when the foundations of society have been carefully laid, and time has cemented the superstructure. When the action of the law is feeble or suspected, a wild species of justice supersedes it, and executes an informal, but not necessarily an unrighteous judgment.

This irregular mode of procedure, generally known as Lynch Law, is by no means peculiar to America, which has not even the honor of giving it a name. Ireland claims that distinction, and with good right, as we shall proceed to show.

Many nations have practiced it in spirit, if not in form.

In Germany, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when every petty prince, noble and prelate claimed the power of life and death over their vassals and dependents; when merchants were plundered and taxed at the caprice of the nobles whose territories they passed through; when the honor of the wives and daughters of citizens was held as a thing of small account, a singular species of Lynch Law became established throughout a considerable portion of the country, particularly in Swabia, Thuringia and Baden. It was administered by secret judges, who were bound by no written code, had no fixed places for holding their courts, but assembled in the depths of some lone forest, ruined church, or castle of one of their chiefs.

They made no prisoners, and pronounced but one sentence—death.

This mysterious association was known as the Holy Vehm, or Vehm Gericht.

No person, however exalted or humble his rank, could withdraw himself from its jurisdiction. It judged and executed in secret. Did our space permit, we could cite the names of royal personages condemned and put to death by its secret agents.

The Holy Vehm has long since disappeared before the progress of law and civilization, but several interesting monuments of its former power are still to be met with in Germany. Possibly we may one day have an opportunity of describing them to our readers, and entering more fully into the subject.

In France, during the earlier stages of the monarchy, when the great vassals of the crown were frequently more powerful than their suzerain, and entered into cabals and even foreign alliances against him, the king appointed some great personage or faithful adherent to hold what was termed the Grand Assize, during which the laws became suspended. He could judge, condemn and execute without any form of trial; nor could his actions ever be called to account.

This was but another form of Lynch Law.

In Scotland they had, during the wild wars with England, on the borders, what was termed Jedbury law. The accused was first hanged, and then a jury were summoned to pronounce upon his innocence or guiltiness.

The above instances are quite sufficient to prove that lynching did not originate in America.

The following sad history, the truth of which has never been disputed, establishes the fact, that if Ireland did not give birth to the practice, it at least gave occasion for the name.

Galway, one of the most romantic counties in the province of Connaught, is washed by the Atlantic. Its shores present the finest bays and creeks in the country, advantages which naturally led to extensive commercial intercourse, particularly with Spain, whose inhabitants settled there in considerable numbers.

The streets of the cities are narrow, and many of the houses have the jealousies or peculiar species of shutter so common in the Peninsula. The neighboring peasantry, as well as the citizens of Galway, still afford proof of Spanish descent—dark hair, fine forms, and flashing eyes. The women might serve as models for the painter or the sculptor.

In 1493, James *Lynch* Fitzstephens was Mayor or chief warder of Galway, a very different office from that of chief magistrate of a town in modern days, the holder of it being not only supreme judge, but commander of the rude species of militia formed for the defence of the place. He could call it out, disband, or employ it as he thought necessary.

The Mayor had considerable commercial relations with Spain. His family most probably came originally from that country, although the name would imply a Norman, rather than a Spanish source.

In the course of his transactions, this worthy man found it necessary to send his son to Spain. Unlike his father, the youth appears to have been of a wild, reckless disposition. Instead of attending to the business which brought him over, he squandered the funds intrusted to him in vulgar dissipation. This compelled him to borrow a large sum of money from the merchant to whom he was accredited, in his father's name. And it was agreed that the nephew of the lender should accompany him back to Ireland, to receive payment of the loan, and enter into more extended commercial relations.

Truly has it been remarked that the first crime proves the fruitful parent of a hundred others. Young Lynch, having no means of his own for discharging the debt, and not daring to avow his defalcations to his father, conceived the horrible idea of ridding himself of his liabilities by murdering the companion of his voyage.

Having induced the crew of the vessel to assist him in this evil design, the unfortunate young Spaniard was seized in the dead of night and cast overboard.

Everything appeared to promise immunity to the cowardly assassin. The ship belonged to his father, and the seamen were in his employ. Spain was far distant, and intercourse between the two countries precarious.

There is little doubt but, on his arrival in Galway, young Lynch was joyously welcomed by his family and friends. In time, he too became a merchant, and, unless tradition errs, a very prosperous one; in fact, so much so that he proposed for the hand of one of the most beautiful girls in his native city, the daughter of a wealthy burgher.

It was willingly accorded.

Preparations for the marriage were being made, when the too confiding father received a pressing summons to attend the death-bed of one of his old seamen. As the man had served him long and faithfully, he felt bound to attend to it.

Our readers may judge of the horror and despair of the true-hearted magistrate, when the dying sailor, impelled by remorse, confessed to him the villainy of his only son, and the share he had taken in his crime.

It was one of those blows which, falling upon the heart, must either crush or change it into steel. The after-conduct of the upright judge will show which effect it produced upon him.

The first act of James Lynch Fitzstephens, on returning to his desolate home, was to arrest his son, whom, despite the entreaties of his wife and relatives, he committed to prison on the charge of murder; the next, to secure such further evidence of his crime as time and circumstances permitted. The old seaman was not the only living witness of the death of the young Spaniard; several others of the crew were still living. These the upright magistrate secured, and when everything was prepared to further the ends of justice, brought the wretched criminal to trial.

It must have been an awful scene. A son before the tribunal of justice pleading for his life, and his father presiding! The evidence was overwhelming; in fact, it does not appear that the young man denied his guilt. With superhuman fortitude, the Mayor of Galway, faithful to his oath of office and the trust reposed in him by his fellow-citizens, heard the verdict of guilty and condemned the culprit to death!

Few persons believed the sentence would be executed, and many resolved that it should not.

The first attempt to save young Lynch from his impending doom was made by his distracted mother and female relatives, who threw themselves at the feet of the inexorable judge and implored his mercy.

"It will leave us childless," urged his wife.

"Not more than his crime has done," was the stern reply.

"Think on the disgrace of our name."

"We must bear that as we may."

"Inhuman parent!" exclaimed the wretched mother. "Neither the laws of God nor man can demand such a sacrifice at the hands of a father. It is against nature—horrible, wicked. It shall not be."

The old man shook his head mournfully.

It is asserted that the beautiful girl affianced to the murderer tried in vain the effect of her tears and entreaties to shake his resolution. If so, she must have loved the murderer well. The mother of the condemned took more active steps, and nearly succeeded in saving him.

Dame Lynch Fitzstephens was a Blake, one of the wealthiest and best-considered families in Galway. Hastening to her relatives and friends, she implored them to avert the infamy from their name as well as hers. They promised, and on the morning of the execution assembled numerously and well armed in the street opposite the Mayor's house, to which for greater security the criminal had been removed.

When James Lynch Fitzstephens appeared with his son, surrounded by the officers of justice, on the way to execution, a rush was made by the Blakes and many of the citizens to rescue him. Seeing that he was unable to contend against their number, the resolute old man commanded that the culprit should be taken back to his home. This was accomplished, although with some difficulty. The Mayor was the last to retreat, strongly barring the doors behind him.

Thinking they had succeeded, the rioters set up a shout of triumph; but they knew not the spirit they had to contend with. In a few minutes culprit and judge appeared at one of the upper windows of the building. With a cry of horror the Blakes saw the Mayor himself fix the rope round the neck of his son, and after embracing, launch him into eternity.

This stern act of justice so confounded them that they dispersed.

After the death of his son, James Lynch Fitzstephens resigned his office, and mingled no more in the world. He had done with life, and the few remaining years of his existence were passed in prayer and retirement.

The house in which the tragedy took place still exists in Lombard street, which the people generally call Dead Man's Lane. Over the principal entrance are to be seen a skull and cross-bones executed in black marble, with the inscription, "Vaniti of vaniti, and all is but vaniti." The building is exceedingly massive, and illustrates the architecture of the period.

Tradition may have added something to the terrible history we have recorded, but the facts are indisputable. They prove, or we are greatly mistaken, that we must look to Ireland for the true origin of the term Lynch Law.

An Insane Man in Pursuit of Self-Destruction.

MR. ISAAC G. HENSHAW, a well-to-do farmer in Oregon, has been subject to fits of great mental depression. One of these recently came upon him suddenly in the night, and under its influence he rushed to a neighboring mountain, intending to commit suicide. On reaching a secluded spot where the snow was piled in icy banks, he cast himself, half stripped, upon it to await death. He lay there Sunday night, Monday and Monday night. Tuesday morning, as hunger began to gnaw within, and he despaired of freezing, he attempted to return to the settlements, fifteen miles distant. He became confused, however, and wandered around all day, sleeping upon the snow at night. Next morning, he made the attempt again, crawling upon his hands and knees much of the time, as he was very weak and his feet frozen, and eating occasionally of sheep sorrel and thimble-berry sprouts. On the morning of the 27th, a company of forty men got together and started out to search for him. They found him Sunday afternoon, in an almost dying state from hunger and exposure. He was taken home, became perfectly rational, and will recover, although portions of his feet will have to be amputated, being badly frozen. He had no food during the seven and a half days he was in the mountains, but that mentioned.

Men of Few Words.

[From the Poughkeepsie Press.]

Some men use words as riflemen use bullets. They say but little. The few words used go right to the mark. They let you talk on and on, till what you say can be answered in a word or two, and then they lance out a sentence, pierce the matter to the quick, and are done. Your conversation falls into their mind as a river into a deep chasm, and is lost from sight by its depth and darkness. They will sometimes surprise you with a few words that go to the mark like a gun shot, and then they are silent again, as if they were re-loading. Such men are safe counsellors and true friends where they profess to be such. To them truth is more valuable than gold, while pretension is too gauzy to deceive them.

A Tree Twelve Hundred Years Old.

[From the Index.]

On Denning's Point, opposite Newburgh, are two old oaks, called the Washington Oaks. One is twenty-three feet in circumference, and the other eighteen feet. A few years ago a companion of these trees was blown down, and on being sawed up, an examination with a microscope revealed seven hundred and sixty-five rings, showing that the tree was seven hundred and sixty-five years old. As it was only thirteen feet in circumference, it is supposed the largest tree now standing must be about twelve hundred years old, and the other a thousand years. The railroad company owning the property has directed that the trees be protected from injury, and it is possible that they may stand another thousand years.

IN SUMMER TIME.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

The corn blades bursting their emerald sheaths,
Like the jewelled spears of a pageant shine;
The orchards shake from their bloomy wreaths
The subtle sweets of an airy wine;
The delicate fronds of the brake unfold
To the passionate kiss of the glowing Noon;
And the harvests shine with a pallid gold
Caught from the showery locks of June.

Over the broad green Intervale
Like a silver serpent the river writhes;
The covert shrills with the piping quail,
And the meadows flash with the ringing scythes.
Far over yon peak in the rosy West
One pale cloud broods on her folded wing,
Like the snowy plume of a warrior's crest
In the sheen of the camp fire glittering.

Deep in the dingle the fox-gloves hang
Their pitchers of purple and gold and brown;
The barberry boughs, with a musical twang,
Scatter their shadows and blossoms down:
All tints and sounds of the perfect day
Are set in the minor key of rest,
From the droning bee on the drooping spray
To the brooding bird on her drowsy nest.

◆

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE,"
"THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH,"
"THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BETWEEN HOPE AND FEAR.

The whisper of Mark Heber, soft and low, and scarcely to be heard above the fluttering of the leaves of the oak-trees whose branches shaded the spring, fairly electrified the soul of the young girl captive.

She started abruptly, spilling half the water in the heavy bucket she was holding, and darted a quick glance at the young Indian lad who was her constant guard and attendant outside the lodge of Neonta.

The boy's wrapt gaze was still fixed upon the bonfire at a little distance, around which his young companions were shouting and dancing. His boyish soul was too absorbed in the bright spectacle to be alive to nearer sights and sounds, and the plaintive cry of the whippowil, and the crisp, slender whisper had alike been unheard and unheeded by him.

Gay looked upward into the interlacing branches of the trees, and then into the darkness beyond the jagged mass of rocks behind the spring, her eager eyes trying to pierce the gloom, but she could trace no outlines of a human figure in either direction.

While she stood, pale and eager, in breathless expectancy, the faint whisper again thrilled through the air, bearing the words:

"I am behind the rocks. Speak, Gay, and assure me beyond a doubt that it is you."

Before Gay could reply, even if such had been her intention, the Indian lad drew a sigh and turned toward her, exclaiming in broken English:

"Pale face speak?"

"No, I did not speak," said Gay Heber, her soft, sweet, flute-like tones raised to a higher pitch than usual, her words being intended for Mark's ears. "I have been listening, that's all."

"Pale face must go back to lodge of Devil Chief," said the boy. "Pale face here too long already. Come."

He motioned her to precede him up the beaten path. Gay slowly obeyed, saying, in the same clear, high pitch of voice she had before employed:

"I must go then; but I'm afraid I shall have to return for water soon again."

There was no response from the shadows, save once again the low notes of the whippowil.

Gay's heart thrilled with gladness. Mark was near. He heard her voice, and comprehended her words. He had come to rescue her.

She went lightly up the path toward the central lodges, the water spilling from the bucket at every step, her soul buoyant and glowing. It was well for her that the darkness hid her face, and that the Indian lad was behind her, else in her first joy and transport he might have suspected her secret.

She paused a moment outside the door of the Devil Chief's lodge to compose her face. Then with drooping eyes she entered the wigwam.

Neonta, Blue Jack's Indian wife, was slowly stirring her iron dish of herbs over the fire. They were simmering gently in water, giving forth a sickly odor. It was the potion Blue Jack had ordered to be administered to Gay Heber that very night, and which was intended to destroy her life.

Neonta frowned at the girl's entrance.

"Pale face gone long," she said harshly.

Gay made no reply.

Neonta peeped into the iron dish, tipping it over slightly, so that the full blaze of the firelight fell upon its contents. They were thick, and of a deep green hue. The herbs were barely covered with the liquid.

"More water," said Neonta. "Bring water."

Gay took a gourd from a hook on the wall and filled it with water, which she carried to her task-mistress. Neonta poured warer upon her steeping herbs, and stirred the liquid with vigor.

"Nice tea," she said, with a soft blandness of manner and tone she had not before exhibited toward the young captive. "Much nice. Pale-faced girl like it. Good for cold."

"Is it for me?" asked Gay.

Neonta nodded assent.

"But I have no cold," declared Gay. "I am well enough. I don't want it."

"Pale face does want it," said Neonta, with a sudden darkening of her visage. "Pale face shall take it. Neonta pour it down throat. Must take it! The Devil Chief has spoken. Pale face must obey."

There was that expressed in the face and eyes of the young Indian woman—a sudden unveiling of her dread purpose against the girl's life—before which Gay Heber shrank back appalled, with an instant conviction of her deadly peril.

That the Devil Chief meant to poison her she knew in that moment as well as if she had overheard and understood his commands to his Indian wife only a few minutes before. Her heart grew faint and sick within her.

Yet she dared not, so much as by a twitching of a muscle, or the changing of her countenance, reveal to Neonta the fact that she had discovered the conspiracy against her life. A deadly abyss had opened up before her in the midst of her path of thorns, and she must face it as one not seeing it.

By an exercise of self-control wonderful in one so young, she summoned up all her courage and presence of mind, and said petulantly:

"If I must take it, I suppose I must. But I have got no cold, and I am not sick. I won't take anything to make my face dark like yours."

Neonta smiled grimly, and continued to stir the potion with vigor.

"Too much water," she remarked, peering into the dish. "Not strong enough. Must have more herb. Girl stir so—not let burn."

Gay accepted the post, and proceeded to stir the deadly decoction, whose sickly perfumes made her actually dizzy. Neonta withdrew from its concealment her bundle of herbs, and approached the hearth.

Gay Heber essayed to lift the dish from its bed of coals, as if to assist the young Indian woman, and by a dexterous turn of her hand, so well executed as to make the affair seem the merest accident, the deadly mess was overturned on the hearth.

Neonta's eyes blazed with anger. She uttered angry words in the Decotah tongue, and picked up a billet of wood and flung it at Gay, who dodged the missile and beat a hasty retreat.

Muttering in her own language, Neonta put a fresh supply of herbs in the dish, and called out gruffly:

"Bring water. Quick! Water!"

Gay sprang forward and caught up the bucket of water, hurrying toward the fire. At the third step her foot slipped, seemingly by accident, and she tripped and fell. The water went in a deluge over the floor.

The rage of Neonta was beyond the power of words to depict. It flamed up in a sudden fierce fire. She ran to the fallen girl and bestowed upon her a dozen kicks with her moccasined feet. She plunged both hands into Gay's short locks and pulled them viciously.

"You shall go for more water," she cried breathlessly. "Pale-faced girl bad. Pale-faced girl no trouble Neonta long. Get water!"

Gay Heber gathered herself up from the floor, and picked up the empty bucket.

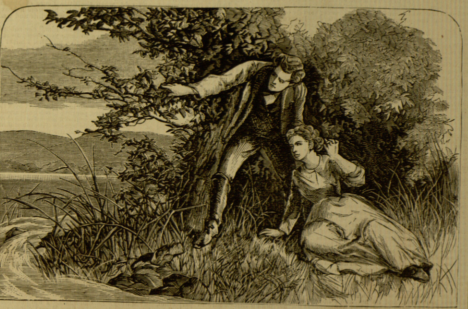
Neonta stepped to the door of the lodge and called out shrilly to the Indian lad who accompanied Gay in her journeys to and from the spring. He had formerly brought the water himself, but with the indolence of the men of his race, he found it much pleasanter and easier to act as guard to some one else who should perform the actual work. He was now at full play in the vicinity of the bonfire, among his young friends, but he heard Neonta's piercing call and obeyed it sullenly, and with evident reluctance.

The Indian wife of the Devil Chief said a few words to the lad, and he motioned Gay Heber to precede him down the path to the spring.

Gay complied with his mandate, carrying the rude bucket.

The night was full of shadows. As yet there were neither moon nor stars visible. In the gloom objects could be traced by a keen eye at a little distance, and Gay wished in her soul for that pitchy blackness such as had twice covered the advance of the Indians upon the little settlement at the junction of the two rivers.

In the lodge of the great chief Yako, Blue Jack's father-in-law, the principal warriors of that branch of the Dacota nation, as the consolidated tribes of Sioux style themselves, sat around the fire-lit hearth in the centre of the wigwam, in grave council. The scent of their pipes, and the sound of Blue Jack's voice as he addressed the assembled braves, floated out to the girl's ears as she flitted past the lodge.


MARK HEBER DISCOVERS THE INDIANS IN PURSUIT.

She hurried down the path, all excitement and eagerness, her glances piercing every shadow. She reached the spring, and bent over it to fill her bucket. The impatient Indian lad, with his face toward his late companions, bade her hasten. Gay softly breathed again the notes of the whippowil, as a signal to Mark Heber.

The Indian boy turned upon her abruptly, astonishment plainly marked on his small stolid face.

"Pale face do that?" he demanded.

"Yes," said Gay, in a clear, high voice. "I did it."

The young lad regarded her for an instant with suspicion and glanced around him, but he saw nothing among the shadows, and, relieved of his momentary doubt, he said:

"Do it again. Wanko learn."

Gay Heber uttered the melancholy notes again and again. The boy trilled them after her with singular fidelity.

"Wanko mocks all the birds," he said proudly. "Wanko mocks the cattle, the sheep, the bison, and the coyote. Wanko will be a great warrior."

There was a soft sound in the stillness, as of some one creeping stilly over the mass of rocks behind them. Gay heard it and trembled. The lad was too occupied with his self-eulogy to hear it.

"Let Wanko mock the bird again," said the girl, in trembling haste. "The pale-faced captive likes to hear him."

Wanko, pleased and flattered, trilled and whistled and sung in a perfect shower of bird-like notes.

And behind him, as Gay saw, a deeper shadow was slowly creeping up, moving almost silently, with a pall-like garment outspread before it.

It seemed to Gay that her heart ascended into her throat. She stood almost paralyzed with terror and expectancy.

The girl's drooping attitude, and perhaps the position of her head, which was stretched forward, as she peered beyond the lad, appeared to surprise the young performer. He stopped abruptly, with another look of suspicion.

And then, before he could speak, or even turn his head, the figure that had crept up behind him in the gloom stood suddenly upright and a heavy blanket was thrown over the boy's head, completely muffling it.

He could not speak or scream. His struggles were wasted, for he was caught up by a pair of strong arms and gathered close to a broad breast against which he was held in an iron grasp.

Gay Heber dropped the bucket into the spring, and bounded forward.

"Oh, Mark! Mark!" she gasped. "It is really you!"

The figure advanced a step nearer to the young girl, with the Indian boy held close to his breast in that iron grasp.

Yes, it was Mark Heber! In the dimness, his boyish face smiled upon her, his true eyes beamed at her, and she could trace his every feature.

She could have flung herself upon his breast, but they had no time now for greetings.

"My darling!" breathed Mark tremulously. "Thank God, I have found you. I feared you would not come out again to-night. But God is good to us. We have no time to lose, Gay. My horse is waiting outside the village, a mile away, in a belt of trees. And I have stolen a horse of the Indians for you. I found it tethered near the wood. Follow me—softly, Gay. There are Indian guards around the village."

"But what will you do with the boy, Mark?"

"Take him with us, as far as the wood. I dare not leave him to raise an alarm, and I cannot kill him."

"He may impede our flight. Can you not bind him hand and foot, Mark, and leave him somewhere near this spot?"

"I dare not wait. Even now you may be missed. I will lead you out of the village as I entered it. Come!"

He turned and moved away among the shadows.

Gay flitted after him, keeping close behind him.

There was a narrow foot-path that led from the village past the spring to the river at a little distance. Mark followed this path, moving as silently as possible, and Gay crept close after him.

They passed three wigwams which, fortunately for them, were deserted. After passing the last one, Mark halted and crouched low on the ground. Gay did the same. Both heard distinctly the approaching tread of the Indian sentinel.

They crouched still lower as the guard came nearer and slowly passed them. A friendly bush half screened them. The young lad in Mark Heber's arms struggled a little, but the captor's stern hands pressed the quadrupled folds of the blanket into the boy's very mouth, and he became motionless as if dead.

The guard passed beyond the hearing of the young couple, and disappeared behind an intervening group of huts.

Mark whispered softly through the stillness: "There may be eyes looking in this direction, Gay. We shall be in range of the sentinel's gaze if he should look this way. We must cross the line and gain the shadow of yonder clump of trees on all fours."

Gay dropped upon her knees and crept away stilly, with her eyes fixed upon a clump of trees Mark had indicated. The young man, pressing the boy close with one arm, crept softly upon his hands and knees after Gay.

Neither spoke, not even whispering. There were no wigwams here to screen them, no friendly bushes, not even an outcropping boulder. At any moment Neonta might sound the alarm, and the Indians might be upon them. There was no time for words—scarcely time for thought.

They crept thus over the level soil, moving with what celerity they could command. The shouts of the Indian children at their play sounded in their ears, and yet every flutter of the leaves of the trees by the river, every rustling of the grasses, every night sound, was heard by them, and rung in their ears with preternatural distinctness.

It was a terrible ordeal, and neither breathed freely until they had gained the shelter of the clump of trees. Here they stood upright.

So far they were safe! No cry of alarm had yet been raised in the Indian village.

"Which way now, Mark?" whispered Gay.

"Follow me," said Mark. "We can try our heels now. This clump of trees will be between us and the village, and will screen us. I think we shall meet no savages. Their horses are mostly on the other side of the village. Now, Gay!"

He gave her one hand, and they started and ran over the level prairie, beginning slowly at first, but increasing their speed as they pressed onward.

Mark was burdened with the Indian boy, who had ceased to struggle, and who lay a dead weight upon his shoulder. Gay had been deprived of exercise of late, and had been tightly bound to her stake every night since she had been at the village, and her limbs felt stiff, and she found that she could not run with her former fleetness. But impeded as both were, they made good progress over the prairie.

They looked back frequently over their shoulders, and still there came to them no sound of alarm, no outcry, from the Indian town.

"It must be that Lenno has come in on his usual evening visit, and that Neonta is talking with him," thought Gay. "Perhaps, as she has other designs upon me, she may be trying to get rid of him, and have forgotten for the time being the length of my absence."

This was the real state of the case.

Neonta was at that very moment occupied in ridding her lodge of Gay's Indian suitor, who had not been invited to join the council of his elders. As Gay was to be killed, Neonta desired to dismiss the visitor from her wigwam. She intended to present to the Devil Chief, on his return from the council, the form of Gay Heber stiff in death.

The young couple sped onward as if pursued.

"Strange they don't miss you, Gay," panted Mark Heber, clinging to her hand, and not abating his speed.

"The village is alive with the children and dogs," said Gay, breathing hard. "Blue Jack is at the council. The women are busy. Neonta does not dream that I could escape. The boy has guarded me carefully so far, and she trusts him as she would a man. He—he is her cousin, or near relative."

Mark hurried onward, moving with swift bounds; and Gay, warming to the flight, imitated his movements.

The mile that had lain between them and the belt of trees was finally traversed. They entered into the cool shadows, wet with sweat, gasping for breath, their hearts beating like drums.

Mark led the way to a little dell near the edge of the grove, where two horses were secured to a tree. Gay could see the animals through the gloom.

One horse was saddled. That was the horse Mark had captured from the outlaws after their attack upon him. The other was not saddled, but he was bridled. This was the Indian horse Mark had found tethered on the prairie, at a little distance from its present halting place.

"One moment, Gay," said the young man. "I want to see if the boy is dead. I'm afraid I've squeezed the life out of him!"

He laid down his burden upon the grass and dead leaves of the wood, and flung off the blanket. The boy did not move. Mark struck a match on his boot, and held the flickering flame close to the lad's face. Gay looked also.

The young savage was not dead. His heart was beating faintly, and his naked breast rose and fell almost imperceptibly with the feeble pulsations. His eyes were closed, his lips bloodless.

"He's unconscious," said Mark. "It's a faint, or some such thing; nothing serious. He's beginning to come to himself already. He's all right, Gay. Come!"

He flung the end of the match on the ground, and catching up the girl's light figure, placed her in his saddle. Then he picked up his blanket which he had wrapped about the head of the young Indian lad, and wrapped it tenderly around Gay, loosened the leathern straps securing the animals to the trees, mounted the bare-backed horse, and the young pair rode out of the wood upon the prairie.

"Safe! Safe at last!" cried Mark Heber. "At last I dare to breathe freely."

The words were scarcely spoken when a loud alarm came ringing from the Indian village.

Gay Heber had been missed, with her young guard.

Mark looked over his shoulder with an eagle glance.

He could see moving figures in the light of the bonfire; he could hear yells and shouts. The council was broken up. The village was in commotion. The Devil Chief, with a suspicion of the truth, and wild with rage, was ordering the warriors to the pursuit. And though Mark Heber could not see Blue Jack at that distance, nor distinguish his voice, he knew well what he was saying and doing.

"Forward!" cried the young man. "Hand me the strap to your bridle, Gay. There, that will do. All the Indians will be after us. We must ride for our lives!"

He struck the horses smartly, and the fugitives dashed over the plain side by side, with the yells of their enemies ringing in their ears.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE ENEMY AGAIN COMING.

Mark Heber and Gay were in truth riding for their lives.

For Blue Jack, with the instinct of a deadly hatred, had suspected in the first moment in which the young captive had been reported missing that she had been rescued, and by Mark Heber. But when the empty bucket was found in the overflowing waters of the spring, and in the wet soil near its brink the imprints of a man's heeled boots were discovered, and also marks of the young lad's struggle with his stern captor, then his suspicion deepened into absolute certainty, and his rage became a consuming fire.

The horses of the savages, as Mark had ascertained, were near the village upon its southern side. They were penned in a corral. The warriors, with Blue Jack at their head, having armed themselves, ran yelling and screaming to this corral, caught their horses and mounted in wild haste.

"After them!" cried Blue Jack, in the Dacota tongue. "There are two of them. Kill them both. Shoot them dead. After them!"

The words, in his sonorous voice, hoarse beyond recognition, and in the guttural language of the Indians, fairly boomed through the air.

The Indians, with their Devil Chief at their head, struck the trail of the young fugitives at the spring, and Blue Jack shouted:

"The nearest cover is the belt of woods a mile to the westward. We'll find our couple there."

They set out at a mad gallop for the belt of woods—the same which Mark Heber and Gay had so recently quitted.

They arrived and found, just recovering, the frightened young Indian lad, whose pallor and stupefaction attested the severity of his recent experiences.

Blue Jack questioned him fiercely, and the boy stammered in reply that he had been seized from behind, muffled in a blanket, and carried off, which was the last he remembered.

Leaving the boy to find his way back to the village as best he could, the Devil Chief exclaimed:

"There are but two, you see—a boy and a girl. They will make directly toward the two-river settlement. We will overhaul them in an hour. Follow!"

He led the way at a gallop in the very direction the fugitives had taken.

Meanwhile Mark and Gay, some three miles in advance, and speeding on in the darkness, pressed forward in a dead silence, listening keenly, but in vain, for sounds of pursuit.

After half an hour's swift ride, Mark drew rein, permitting the horses to subside to a walk.

"The horses will be blown, if we press them too hard," he said. "'The more haste,' sometimes, 'the less speed.' The night is dark, Gay. The Indians know the very route we will naturally pursue, but they can hardly distinguish our trail in the darkness. We'll turn aside here from the direct course. It's the only way of avoiding them."

He suited the action to the word, and turned abruptly at an angle with the course he had been following.

"As near as I can tell in the darkness," he said, "we're now headed for the south-east. We'll keep some hours in this direction, and in the morning we'll go directly southward, thus moving in a sort of zig-zag. I think we can thus rid ourselves of our pursuers."

"Why should we not keep on going east till we come out at Fort Pierre or Fort Sully?" asked Gay.

"Because the whole Sioux country lies between us and the forts, and it is a question if we could ever reach either of them," responded Mark. "Our best plan is to hasten back to the settlement, where you will be safe."

"I don't know as I shall ever be safe anywhere," said Gay sorrowfully. "Oh, Mark, God sent you to me to-night. They meant to kill me—to give me a poisoned drink. And, Mark, Blue Jack says he *is* my father! He told me so days ago. So it's turned out as I feared, and I am the daughter of the fiercest desperado in all the West! And yet, Mark," the girl added, "I know that I am not his daughter! I KNOW it!"

"He would not be likely to desire to kill his own daughter," said Mark. "No, Gay, I don't believe he is your father."

"Then what is he to me?" demanded Gay. "Why does he hate me so? How do I stand in his way?"

Mark said he could not guess, and quickened the speed of the horses, listening intently for some hint of the pursuers.

"Did you come up here all alone?" said Gay, presently.

Mark replied in the affirmative.

"What! Are there none of the settlers with you? Are there no soldiers near?"

"None, Gay. You and I are all alone upon the great plains, with only God for our helper, and with the Indians—a full hundred of them, I should say—in pursuit of us. The settlers had to turn back to take care of our fort. We are over two hundred and twenty miles from the settlement. They dared not come so far, and when they turned back I came on alone."

"I knew that you were following me, Mark," said Gay simply. "I felt that you were hurrying on with all speed. I have expected you since yesterday; and yet, when I heard that bird-call, my heart seemed to stand still. Oh, Mark, you're a brave fellow! There are not many boys who would travel so far all alone, and brave so many perils, just to rescue a girl who was, after all, no relation to them—only a little good-for-nothing, without parents, or name, or anything."

"Perhaps if you had been my sister, although I should have come for you just the same, I might have felt a little differently," said Mark honestly. "But it's because we are not brother and sister that I've been just wild about you since you were carried off."

"I don't quite understand," said Gay, in a perplexed voice.

"I don't want you to understand just yet. At any rate, this is no time to tell you what I mean. Is not that the bark of a coyote, Gay? Or is it the shouts of the Indians?"

"It's the bark of a coyote," announced the girl, after listening. "I hear nothing of the savages. Oh, Mark, tell me about poor Will Whitman? Was he killed?"

"No," said Mark; "he tumbled off the bank into the river, and the Indians went off and left him. We hurried into the fort at the sound of the signal gun, which you perhaps heard, and mounted and set out to recover you. We met Will rowing down the river to the fort."

"Then he is safe—poor boy! And now tell me, Mark, how you came to enter the Indian village to-night—alone, and at so early an hour."

"I rode all last night in my impatience," replied Mark, "and at daybreak this morning found myself, to my surprise, actually in sight of Yako's village, and only some four or five miles from it, upon a ridge of land covered with trees. I remained there all day, sleeping and looking at the village through my spy-glass by turns. The night came on early. It will be light by midnight, I suppose, with the stars at least, and I desired to get off with you in the early darkness. Of course I knew that the village would be all alive at so early an hour, but my chances were greater to find you. If I waited until the village was hushed and still, I might get no clue as to which in all those wigwams you were sheltered. I thought over all the risks, considering the advantages of prompt action and of delay. The former outbalanced the latter. As soon as the twilight fell I mounted and rode in the shadow of the trees lining the river, to the belt in which we found the horses to-night. Hark! What is that noise?"

"Only a coyote, Mark. The Indians must have gone on to the southward. I am straining my eyes and ears, but I can neither see nor hear them. But O, Mark," cried Gay, her mind reverting to the great subject of her rescue, "I tremble when I think of the perils you ran in coming to the village, in entering it so boldly. What if some one had seen or heard you! You have no idea how keen the senses of the Indians are."

"I think I can guess," said Mark. "It was the only way in which I could hope to rescue you. At a later hour the sentinels would have been more on the alert. Then they would have been alive to the faintest rustling of a leaf. At a later hour too, how could I find your shelter? How could I get you free, if there happened to be others sleeping in the same wigwam? No, Gay, the result proves that I have done well. My success is ample proof that I acted wisely. I left my horse in the wood, and crept out to reconnoitre. It was then rapidly growing dark. I saw a horse tethered on the prairie, and I confiscated him, taking him into the wood and fastening him to a tree, as I had secured mine. This is the horse, and a good fellow he is," added Mark Heber, patting the animal's slender neck.

"But if you had been seen from the village!"

"It was already too dark for that. The village was nearly a mile away. And I expected to incur some risks, Gay, darling. Then, having secured the horse, I made my way to the village, nearly every step of the way on my hands and knees. I saw the sentinel outlined against the bonfire in the background, and watching my chance, I crept into the village, keeping low on the ground. I found the beaten path deserted, and stole along it like a big dog until I came to the spring. Then, hearing some one approach, I scrambled over the rocks and hid in the bushes behind them, waiting for the approaching persons to pass the spot. But they did not pass. They came to the spring and halted there. I saw that the persons were a young girl and a small boy."

"It was I, then, with the little fellow who was set to watch me?" cried Gay.

"Yes, it was you. As you straightened yourself, having filled your bucket with water, I saw your face outlined against the lurid light of the bonfire. I knew it must be you; yet to make all sure, and not to excite the suspicion of the Indian lad, I called to you in the notes of the whippowil, which we have so often practised together. You answered me, and you can imagine, Gay, how my heart thrilled at the answering call. Then I spoke to you—and the rest you know. You said you would come back to the spring, in your speech to the boy intended for my ears, and I waited for you."

"It sounds easy enough when you tell it all in that matter-of-fact way, Mark," said Gay, "but I can supply what you leave out—the starts, the tremblings, the perils of discovery, and all the terror that belongs to the situation. It was no light task to enter the very stronghold of the Indians single-handed. I owe you my life, Mark. That woman, Blue Jack's Indian wife, meant to kill me to-night by his orders. I would rather have died at her hands than married Lenno, but I do not want to die. Life is sweet to the young and healthful."

"Who was Lenno?" demanded Mark.

Gay explained that he was an Indian dandy whom Blue Jack had at first ordered her to marry; and she described the young brave's appearance and peculiarities, his manner of courting, his gifts, and even recalled some of his high-flown speeches to her, rehearsing them for Mark's edification.

But Mark did not smile, as she expected. He seemed angry, and exclaimed:

"The miserable Indian puppy! How dared he talk of love to you? I should like to meet him in a fair fight, the red-skinned hound! This proves that Blue Jack is not your father—proves it to my perfect satisfaction. You are only fifteen years old—a mere child yet. If I had money, I would send you to school yet for three years, and give you the enjoyments and pleasures of your age. You are only a child, Gay—and I must do my best to remember the fact," he said to himself, under his breath.

"Everybody don't consider me a child," said Gay, in a tone that seemed considerably aggrieved. "I am growing very tall, and *I* don't consider a girl who can furnish a house out of a piece of cloth and a few boards and nails, who can cook anything from meats to flummeries, who can make a boy's clothes and suit him in his shirts—I don't call such a girl 'a mere child.' Why, I've been through the Higher Arithmetic, the big Grammar and Geography, and I've studied astronomy and drawing, and I know the Rule of Three just as well as I know a broomstick. I'd like to go to school, Mark, but I'm no baby."

"Will Whitman don't think you are," said Mark gloomily.

"Of course he don't. And that reminds me—but you haven't seen Will to talk with him since I was captured, so he can't have asked you any question, Mark."

Mark looked over his shoulder, and inquired: "What question did he want to ask me? Oh, Gay, he talked love to you, and asked you to marry him? And he wants my consent?" cried Mark, in a pained voice. "Is that it?"

"Yes, that's it."

"And you love him, and want to marry him?"

"Oh, no, Mark," said Gay brightly. "I'm too young, you know. And that's what I told Will."

Mark repressed a groan.

"But you love him, Gay?" he said anxiously.

"No, I don't," said Gay saucily. "We won't talk any more of Will Whitman, Mark, until you marry Het Amory. There's a bargain. I believe, Mark, dear," she added, "that we have thrown the Indians off the track. My spirits are rising like cork in water. I've been gloomy so long that I feel sort of witch-like to-night."

They rode on, talking, explaining, and chatting merrily, but under all the lightness lay a secret dread and terror to which neither of those brave young souls would have willingly confessed. Each sought to cheer the other, and Gay rattled on with a host of bright speeches, and Mark kept a keen look-out for their pursuers.

The hours passed, and the clouds lifted from the sky, the threatened rain blew over, and the stars came out one by one till a mild light, dim and faint, yet softly luminous, pervaded earth and sky.

And still nothing was seen of the pursuing savages.

The night wore on, and the morning dawned. The fugitives came to a halt about sunrise in a wooded region upon the bank of a wide stream, and tethered their horses, and sat down upon the ground to rest.

Mark produced some cold roasted meat from his saddle-bags and divided it with Gay. It was the pleasantest and sweetest meal either had ever eaten. The water of the shallow stream served as their beverage, and they had the cool shade of the trees upon the edge of the forest to shelter them from the sun.

When the meal was over, Mark said:

"You are tired out, Gay, and must rest. The horses also must rest. You can lie down here in your blanket, while I watch over you. This afternoon you may watch while I sleep. We shall have to divide the duties of sentinel."

"I am glad to lie down," said Gay, finding a shady knoll under an oak-tree, and spreading her blanket there. "But you are tired too, Mark. I'll be awake by noon."

She covered herself in the folds of her blanket and went to sleep.

Mark paced to and fro, keenly vigilant.

Gay had been asleep about an hour, when Mark bounded toward her and shook her, crying out:

"Waken, Gay! The Indians, full fifty of them, are coming! Blue Jack is at their head. They are not three miles distant, and are making directly for us! Great Heaven! Can they have seen us? Or have they tracked us?"

Gay Heber leaped to her feet with a cry of consternation.

There, to the westward, she saw a body of Indian warriors—nearly three miles away—yet plainly visible, and easily recognized in that clear atmosphere as savages. They were making straight for the point at which the fugitives were resting.

Had they seen the fugitives? Had they tracked them to this side route, where the young pair had believed themselves safe?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NED'S RING.

BY MATHILDE ESTVAN.

"Well, Ned, is that really you, and not your ghost? I am glad to see you. When did you return to the city?" said Robert Forney, a young man of about twenty-three years of age, to Edward Yorrik, on meeting him, one clear, cold December day, on Fourth Avenue, in New York.

"Yes, 'tis really I; but I almost wish it were my ghost, bringing you tidings that I had safely arrived on the other side of Jordan, and all that sort of thing," replied Ned, a fine, but at this moment a rather lugubrious looking youth, while he warmly shook hands with his friend.

"What 's the matter with you, and whence dates your melancholy?" asked Robert, laughing, and closely scanning Edward's face with his merry blue eyes. "Are you at odds with Nellie? or—" suddenly assuming a very grave air—"why, you are not married, young man? Tell me quickly, because you have the forlorn and bewildered countenance which Cousin Will. and Sam. Brandon had, after they began to experience that Hymen's fetters are not altogether garlands of roses. You laugh! Oh, well, that's a happy sign. You are not quite so far gone as all that."

"No, indeed," said Ned, as the two promenaded toward Broadway. "I am going exactly the opposite road. I broke yesterday with Nellie, and all that sort of thing."

"Edward Yorrik!" exclaimed Robert, becoming now really serious. "You broke with Nellie, after a courtship dating almost from the cradle! Well, well, that accounts satisfactorily for the clouds upon your brow. But come, let us go to my room, and then tell me whether it is really a rupture for life, or only a passing lovers' quarrel."

"When I tell you that I took the ring which I gave her just a year ago, from her finger, and trampled upon it until it was crushed, though the ring had cost me twenty-eight dollars, you will comprehend that the reasons which induced me to act thus must have been serious," said Ned.

"Surely they must have been of an awfully grave nature," said Robert, his eyes dancing with amusement. "An eccentric, foolish European Count may throw precious pearls into the street when he quarrels with his sweetheart, but when a sane, practical man forgets so far the value of a present he made as to trample upon it, he must be wrought up almost to the pitch of insanity."

"And so I was," said Ned, when they were comfortably lounging in Robert's room. "You have no idea what a slave she made of me, and how she used my devotion to her for her own selfish ends, and all that sort of thing. Yesterday I was to accompany her to church at evening. When I arrived there she was dreadfully troubled because her sister Julia was out, and she was afraid to leave her little nephew alone with the servants. Well, I promised to stay with the spoiled brat, that she might go to church with her great friend Alice. I had a dreadful time of it. The boy, accustomed to be coaxed to go to sleep, began to scream as if a knife had been at his throat, and all that sort of thing, when I, as soon as Nellie was out of hearing, laid him on the lounge, where he generally takes his first nap, and told him to go to sleep instantly. I did not take the slightest notice of his kicks and screams, and did not even wipe his nose, and all that sort of thing, but placing myself comfortably in an easy chair, began to read. I had read—well, I don't know exactly how long. I did not look at my watch, but perhaps an hour or so, when somebody touched my arm. I looked up, and the little fellow stood beside me, his face in a frightful condition. As he promised to be good, I washed him, took him on my lap, told him stories, gave him a large dish full of sugar, and all that sort of thing, and thus proved that by judicious treatment the most perverse nature can be remodelled. Well, while we were thus amicably sitting together, and he, to evince his gratitude, made me all over sticky with sugar, I showed him a picture of Nellie which I had in my pocket-book, asking him who it was.

"'Nellie,' he said, laughing; and jumping from my lap, he went to the table and brought me an album. Pointing to a photograph of a handsome man which until now I had never seen among the pictures, he said, 'Nellie's beau.'

"I felt as if the trumpet of Jericho were blown in my ears.

"'Who is it?' I asked the precious urchin, after recovering somewhat from the stunning effect, and all that sort of thing.

"'Nellie's beau! Nellie's beau!' repeated he, dancing through the room.

"'Who told you?' I cried, catching him, and I am not sure that I did not give him an involuntary shaking, for he began to scream.

"Promising him a drum, a horn, a fiddle, candy, and heaven only knows what, I had him at length so far quieted that he told me Nellie had said so. I asked him the gentleman's name, but he did not know it. I believe I mentioned every name in Christendom, but I found not the right one until I said:

"'Is his name not John?'

"Then he said:

"'His name is John.'

"He told me, also, that he came every evening.

"'Does he tell Nellie that she is pretty?' I asked.

"'Yes, yes, he tells Nellie that she is pretty,' replied he, dancing again through the room.

"'Does he kiss her?' questioned I further, wishing for the strength of Samson to tear the house down, when he sung out:

"'Yes, he kisses Nellie—he kisses Nellie!'"

"But, Ned, how in the name of common-sense could you believe that child? Don't you see that he answered all your questions just as you put them? I declare, of all love-sick fools, you are the most egre—"

"Now please don't interrupt me. Let me first conclude my tale, and then you may have your saying. As for my believing that young one, I think nothing can be more rational. Is it not said that out of the mouths of babes proceeds the truth, and all that sort of thing? Well, after this interesting disclosure, I felt like one benumbed, and do not know how foolishly I might have acted when Nellie returned, had not Freddy roused me from the stupor into which I had fallen, with shouts of delight.

"'What 's the matter, boy?' I asked.

"'Oh!' cried he, clapping his hands in great glee, 'they all swim beautifully. Mamma, Nellie, grandma, and ever so many on their backs; John, papa, and the others on their noses. You are already drowned; so is grandpa. You are lying deep down there, waiting for the others.'

"Turning around, I saw with horror that the boy had thrown most of the pictures of the album in the basin in which I had washed his face.

"Being just about to prevent him from trying whether the others could swim beautifully, the door opened, and Nellie entered.

"'Oh, Edward!' exclaimed she, 'I am so sorry that—'

"I did not allow her to proceed, but taking the ring I had given her from her finger, I dashed it on the floor, stepped upon it, and without deigning to explain my conduct by a word, I left the house."

"Grand! tragic! but uncommonly foolish," said Robert. "How can a man out of an insane asylum act thus? If, led by the weeping Nellie, they come and put you in a strait-jacket, do not call upon me to testify to the healthy condition of your mental faculties.

"I must say that beats everything I ever heard of a lover's clearsightedness. Heaven forbid that I should fall into the antiquated extravagance of thinking the girl I love an angel, but I am quite sure that I would not condemn her so rashly. Tell me how you will ever set things right again, when you hear—as you surely will—that you made a fool of yourself!"

"Do not mention it," said Ned, becoming very uneasy. "How could it be possible that so small a child could imagine all that?"

"All what? The child showed you a picture, and called it Nellie's beau. The picture might be, for all you know, the likeness of Prince Alexis; but you, like most lovers, ever ready to torment yourself—thank Heaven, I am a placid exception—grasp with both hands at the idea, and ask the young one questions, which he, childlike, only repeats as an answer. Do not come near me for consolation, if you lose the girl thus."

"For goodness' sake be quiet, or you will turn my brain, and all that sort of thing," said Ned, his color coming and going, as he rapidly paced the room. "Now I come to think of it, I really do believe that it was a picture of Prince Alexis. Oh, Rob., you were always so ingenious to help us, at college, out of all sorts of trouble, do lend me a helping hand to get out of this difficulty. Oh, what a confounded fool I was, to—"

"If you wish me to think whether I can assist you to regain the good graces of your divinity, you will please—after having brushed your dishevelled locks smoothly over your knitted brow—sit quietly down, and not interrupt me either by word or look."

Deep silence reigned for several minutes in the room. Robert was lost in reverie; and Ned, his large brown eyes anxiously fixed upon his friend's face, hardly dared to breathe.

"I have it! I have it!" at length exclaimed Robert, jumping up from his seat. "I have it; but you must do exactly as I tell you."

"Of course I shall. Only say what you wish me to do."

"What I wish you to do?" said Robert, again musing over his plan; "well, very little. You need do nothing but lie quietly down here, and think such aggravating, blood-stirring, heart-rending, honor-offending, disagreeable things, till you are in the highest fever you possibly can get into without being on the brink of the grave. During this time I will go to your aunt's, and tell Nellie not only how sick you are, but also that your fever was undoubtedly coming on last night, and that will be sufficient to explain to her, and at the same time excuse your conduct of last night. If they should come to see you, above all things be careful not to mention the ring. What a person does in the heat of a raving fever, he has no recollection of afterward."

"But will Nellie—"

"Of course she will forgive you. Nothing is so sure to pacify as a basket of flowers, if you have had a slight quarrel with a girl; and if you have quarrelled seriously, and desire to make up, without wishing to ask pardon, just become ill, have forebodings of an eternal leave-taking, and you will see how quickly the unrelenting tyrant softens."

Robert went to Mrs. Lane, Ned's aunt, and found the whole house in commotion. Nellie had suddenly fallen ill, and as she wept all day long, and refused to see a physician, her mother and sister were in despair what to do with her.

"I am sorry that I have to aggravate the trouble you all seem to be in, by bringing you sad news of Edward Yorrik," said Robert.

"Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake speak low! Nellie is in the other room, and the walls are so thin she can hear every word," said Mrs. Lane. "What is the matter with Edward?"

"I found him this morning wandering through the streets in such a condition that he was almost out of his head. How long he had been in that deplorable state I cannot say, but I suppose that the fit came over him yesterday. He is now in my room, and is considerably cooled down, but requested me to go and see Miss Nellie, and tell her that he is very sorry to be unable to accompany her to-night to the concert at Steinway Hall, as she allowed him. He hopes to be better to-morrow, but I hardly think it prudent for him to leave the house for the next five or six days."

All this Robert had said as loud as if Mrs. Lane were stone-deaf, entirely disregarding her desperate winks, coughs, and gestures for him to moderate his voice.

"Mother, please come here a moment," came Nellie's voice through the "gate ajar," not of the other world, but of the other room, a place more within our reach to speak of its occupants.

Mrs. Lane complied with her daughter's request, and Robert, left alone, nodded to himself quite satisfied, thinking that Ned's illness would cure Nellie, and Nellie's illness would surely be a radical cure for hot-blooded Ned.

Returning with a pink note from her daughter to Ned, Mrs. Lane told Robert that either she or her son would go to see Ned, and that Nellie felt much better, and was greatly obliged to him for the message.

"Now what does she write?" asked Robert, after he had delivered the note to his friend, who, devoted to his cousin Nellie since his boyhood, was really in a fever of expectation and remorse when Robert returned.

"She is an angel!" said Ned rapturously, kissing the note, and in his turn quickly recovering, when he heard that his conduct of last night had made Nellie sick.

Such egotists are lovers!

"She is an angel, and I assure you that she shall never regret, when she is my wife, that I was such a fool and crushed her ring, and all that sort of thing."

PATTERSON'S GHOST.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

He was called Pat Truitt, but his name was not Patrick, but Patterson. He was tall and strong, with an honest, frank face, a voice full of cheerful, hearty life, and a laugh that made the windows rattle; and he was in love with Maggie Blackiston.

He was a farmer, and lived upon one of the finest farms in Dutchess county, a homestead and grounds that have been over a hundred years in the possession of the Truitt family. Some six years ago we celebrated the twenty-fifth birthday of Pat, and it was upon the occasion of the country ball given by Mrs. Truitt, Pat's mother, that Maggie Blackiston first met Mr. Horatio Seymour, a land agent, who was trying to find oil wells in Dutchess county, and was boarding with Mrs. Grey, who brought him to the party as escort for her three red-haired girls.

Maggie Blackiston was belle of the ball, bewitchingly pretty in a dainty blue dress that fitted her plump little figure to perfection, her brown curls caught up and snooded by the brightest of azure ribbons, and her brown eyes full of sparkle and vivacity. From the glossiest of her rich curls to the tip of her pretty little slippers, she was as bright a picture, and as fascinating a country belle, as could be wished for to attract admiring eyes.

One pair were at her service at once, and the city beau struck his colors half an hour after he entered the room, and paid admiring homage to the sparkling little beauty. It was not very strange that the simple country girl should be attracted by the gallant attentions, the courtly bows and smiles of the new-comer, but I did want to box her ears when she turned the cold shoulder upon Pat.

The first rebuff only caused Pat to open his honest blue eyes in amazement, it seemed so impossible that Maggie could mean to slight him. Maggie! Why, he had carried her about in her long clothes, when he was a sturdy six-year-old urchin, and had been her loving admirer ever since. But a second time he came to her, as she was standing near me, resting from a dance.

"Will you dance the next quadrille with me?" he asked.

"I am engaged to Mr. Seymour," she answered, toying with the ribbons on her wrists.

"But you have not danced with me once this evening, Maggie."

"Miss Margaret Blackiston is my name," she said grandly, and walked away.

Pat gave a long, low whistle as he watched her; then meeting my eyes, shrugged his shoulders, and turned to other guests. I could see that the blow stung him deeply, but he was not a man to parade his sore heart, and bravely filled his part of host. Not once, however, did he go near Maggie, after the insulting rebuff.

When everybody else had gone, Mrs. Truitt and I drew our chairs to the kitchen fire for a little gossip before we retired. As we were chatting, Pat came in and sat down beside me.

"Tired, Pat?" I said.

"Not very tired. Aunt Fanny, what do you know about Mr. Seymour?"

"Nothing. He is looking for oil wells, he says, and drives about the country in a stylish buggy, with a high stepping horse. Likewise he wears store clothes, a gold watch, and a shiny silk hat, every day in the week."

"I know all that. You don't know who he is, or what he is."

"No. He converses well, seems to have travelled, and is an adept in the art of paying compliments."

"Don't you worry, Pat," his mother here broke in sharply. "Maggie always was a born coquette. She would flirt with the cows, if there was nothing else handy, but her heart is in the right place."

"She may think the right place is in Mr. Seymour's keeping," Pat said gloomily.

A moment later he impatiently brushed up the thick clustering curls from his high forehead, and said:

"It is very late. Good-night. Don't sit here gossiping all night," and so left us.

"Is Maggie Blackiston blind, that she cannot see how handsome Pat is?" said Mrs. Truitt; "he is worth a dozen city chaps. She is a dear little girl, and will make a good farmer's wife, but she will make a fatal mistake if she tries to be a city lady."

I quite agreed with my cousin. Pretty, bewitching Maggie would certainly never be at home in fashionable circles. Yet it seemed as if Mr. Horatio Seymour did not view matters with our eyes. Every day his attentions became more marked. He drove Maggie out in his stylish buggy; he met her when she walked; he trod daintily in his shiny boots into the barn-yard to watch her, at milking time; he drank tea about seven times a week at Mr. Blackiston's, and made that well-to-do farmer feel quite poverty-stricken when detailing the accounts of the individuals he had made millionaires by the discovery of oil upon their farms.

Mrs. Blackiston muttered something about *humbugs* whenever these stories were repeated for her benefit, and did not scruple to tell Maggie she was a little idiot if she threw Pat over for this perfumed, dainty gentleman. But with her father on her side, the willful little beauty flirted with her new adorer to her heart's content, never heeding Pat's grave, pale face.

Matters had gone on in this unsatisfactory fashion for nearly two months, when a fever broke out in the village two miles below us, and soon made its appearance in some of the farm-houses in our more immediate neighborhood. The malady assumed so much of an epidemic form, and was so malignant, that a terror crept over us all, and those in health could scarcely find time to nurse the sick, console the dying, and bury the dead.

At the first sound of danger, Mr. Horatio Seymour suddenly vanished. Mrs. Blackiston, Mrs. Truitt and I had but little time to watch the young folks, but I did see that Pat preserved a dignified reserve, and I respected him the more for not throwing his heart again under Miss Maggie's feet.

During the worst of the malady Pat Truitt was foremost in the ranks of male nurses and assistants, and great strong farmer as he was, we heard on all sides of his gentle, womanly care of his old friends stricken down by illness and death.

The day came at last when the plague was stayed, when for a long week there had been no new case, no death. Mrs. Truitt and I were sitting over the kitchen fire, talking gravely of the scenes and trials of the past few weeks, when the door suddenly opened, and Pat reeled in, white as death, and fainted at our feet. Nine days of suffering, of delirious raving, of burning fever, and then our brave handsome boy lay before us cold and still, a sheet over his face, and no breath in the shrunken nostrils or on the pale lips.

Two days of mourning passed heavily away, and we dressed the stalwart figure in the long white grave-clothes, and placed him in the narrow coffin for his last, deep sleep.

The funeral party were all assembled in the little parlor, and Mrs. Truitt and I were in a little room next the one where Pat lay still and cold, when the little figure of Maggie Blackiston came in softly. She wore a heavy black dress, and her face was white and wan, with red swollen eyes.

"I don't deserve to see him," she sobbed. "I don't deserve to have you speak to me; but will you not forgive me, Mrs. Truitt? I loved him so dearly! I have had the fever too, or I should have been over before. They never told me till to-day that he was dead. Oh, Pat! Pat! dead, and never can say you forgive me!"

It was not in human nature—certainly not in our softened, sorrow-stricken hearts—to resist the pitiful pleading, and the bereaved mother herself led her to the death chamber. I could hear her wailing out her grief over the white, still figure, pouring kisses and caresses over the pale face, and sobbing out all her love and penitence. Side by side with the widowed mother, she followed the hearse, and saw the coffin lowered into the grave. Then we caught the little fainting figure, and took her again to the carriage. She was so evidently ill, that Mrs. Blackiston consented to stop with her at our house, being nearer the cemetery than her own, and so it fell out, that as the clock struck twelve, we three women were grouped around a lounge upon which Maggie lay, exhausted with weeping.

Suddenly, as we sat very still and sorrowful, Maggie started up, with a piercing shriek, and pointed to the window.

"Look! It is Patterson's ghost!" she cried, and fainted again.

We turned startled looks to the window to see, in the clear moonlight, standing erect before the window, the tall figure of Patterson Truitt, in his long white shroud. While we sat breathless, expecting to see him vanish, he slowly moved toward the door, and on the still air rose a feeble voice:

"Mother, let me in!"

"Great Heaven keep my reason!" she gasped; but Mrs. Blackiston opened the door.

In walked the ghost, feebly, and staggering like a drunken man.

"Mother," he said again, "I am not dead. The medical students from B—— College dug me up to-night, and are running home at this minute, frightened nearly out of their lives. I am no ghost, mother."

There was a fluttering movement on the lounge, a little figure shot past us, and Maggie was sobbing out her joy in Patterson's arms.

When we were all quieted, and Pat was seated in the deep arm-chair, wrapped in blankets, and sipping hot wine, he told us:

"I knew all that was passing when I lay in that deep trance sleep. I heard dear mother weeping for her son, Aunt Fanny's choking words of comfort. I knew when I was dressed for the grave and lifted in my coffin. I heard Maggie's grief, and it seemed then as if my breaking heart must burst the icy bonds that held me. But when I heard the clods fall upon the coffin lid, I only prayed that death might come soon, and I be spared the agony of waking in my horrible prison. When the coffin lid was raised again to-night, the first rush of air stirred again the blood in my veins, and I shouted aloud and stood up. I wish"—and here Pat broke into his old genial laugh—"I wish you could have seen my preservers run. I did not stay to call them back, but came here at once, to mother, and to"—here he held out his thin hand—"Miss Margaret Blackiston."

"Don't, Pat," she pleaded.

"I won't, if you will drop your name next month and take mine instead."

"Nonsense, Pat," said his mother; "you won't be about in a month."

But he was. Love proved a powerful tonic for both invalids, and we had a merry wedding just one month after the appearance of Patterson's ghost.

HAVING HIS WAY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Solomon Stearns was the clerk in the printing establishment of Storms and Sefton. The week previous to the time of our story, Solomon's mind had been very much disturbed, in fact his equanimity quite destroyed, by the gay, fashionable and thoughtless wife of Mr. Storms coming into the counting-room and saying:

"Tell Mr. Storms I have taken a little pin-money."

She swept clear the cash drawer of all the money Stearns had collected to pay off the hands the next day, and went away smiling, never knowing or caring how much trouble she gave to the worthy proprietor, or any of his employes. The good-natured husband made no other remark upon this not unfrequent occurrence, than:

"Well, Stearns, we must do better next week. We shall have larger receipts, and will make it all right with the boys. Tell them so."

Solomon said, "Yes, sir," to his employer; but to himself, a few moments after, "I don't believe in letting a woman have her way all the time."

The next week Solomon vowed to be "up to her." Friday morning he had a sufficient sum to pay the men for two weeks' work. Saturday afternoon was the usual time for doing this. So Solomon would not trust the money anywhere but in his own keeping.

He returned home that evening feeling very much relieved by the thought of having fixed all right for the boys next day. With much pleasure he communicated this to his wife.

"Dear me! Solomon, if I had been you, I wouldn't have trusted myself with so much money. Supposing you 'd been knocked down and robbed, what then?" said Mrs. Stearns.

"Just like you, wife; always supposing something anything but pleasant. Suppose, please, I had not secured the money for the poor boys, what then?" said Solomon.

"Why, they would have had to wait until you had. But if you had lost the money, then it would be a very different thing. You would have to make the money good. Dear, dear! it makes me shake to think of your coming along the street at night with so much in your pocket. Have you looked to see if you have it now?" asked Mrs. Stearns.

"Oh, pshaw, Nancy! I declare you are the queerest woman I ever did know. Now there is the money safe!" exclaimed Solomon, drawing the well-filled wallet from his pocket, and slamming it down on the table beside her.

"Oh, mercy! Look there, Solomon," screamed Mrs. Nancy, pointing with a terrified look toward the window.

"Look at what?" exclaimed Solomon.

"I saw a man's face at the window," she whispered.

"Nancy Stearns, if you were any other woman but my wife, I'd say, What a fool!—screeching and screaming because a man might have glanced in while passing on the street," Solomon said, in an irritated tone.

"Solomon Stearns, as you are my husband, I would like to say, What a wise man! But I am sorry I can't, particularly as you ought to be, considering your name. It 's against my principles to lie. A wise man would not have displayed his pocket-book, with the window blinds open. But, Oh, mercy, Solomon, we ought not to quarrel, when who knows but we may be murdered before to-morrow morning! I wish you had not fetched that money home with you," groaned Mrs. Nancy.

"Do hush, wife, and be sensible, and we will both stop complimenting each other. Now give me my supper," said Solomon.

His wife went out and hurried in the supper. She tried to banish from her mind thoughts of danger, but it was not an easy matter. She was not naturally nervous or timid. She had been reading that day of some noted burglars being in town, and a word of warning to housekeepers. Again, a neighbor had been in to tell of a friend near by whose whole family had been chloroformed, and the house cleared of everything valuable. So *this* was the secret of Mrs. Stearns' disquietude.

The subject so annoying was, however, dropped during the supper, and indeed until sometime after, when, as he was always accustomed, Solomon took down the chess-board, and said, "Come, Nancy."

Nancy came and began to play.

Frequently, "Why, Nancy, what *are* you about?" Solomon asked, until at length he exclaimed, "What on earth are you about, Nancy? What are you thinking of?"

"Solomon, did you look behind you when you came in the door to-night? Dear, dear, a man might have come in when you did."

"Nancy Stearns, a man did come in when I came, and not a child, for you to be talking so to. Now, stop it, once and for all. Don't you know thoughts are in the air? Some fellow will catch yours, and think of robbing us. The way you go on, one would think I had the great 'Koh-i-noor,'" getting really angry then.

"I don't know what or how much that is. I only know that Mrs. Plimpton told me that there 's lots of robbers around," Mrs. Stearns said, looking as if she saw one then.

"Oh, go to bed, Nancy. You are nervous."

"Indeed I won't, until you do. I 'm not going up stairs by myself to be murdered, all alone!" snapped Mrs. Stearns.

Solomon smiled dryly as he answered:

"Oh, well; I suppose it won't hurt so much if I suffer with you. Well, I 'll go, as I have to be up very early to-morrow."

Nancy peeped behind every large chair and sofa through the rooms below, and when into her own, she turned on the gas in full blast, opened the closet doors and felt about there, pulled away the fire-board, and was peeping up the chimney, when Solomon said sternly:

"Now stop! I don't believe in letting a woman have her way. I 've said so before to-day, and now I am determined to stand to it. Besides, you 'll have every musquito a mile round coming in here. There!" turning off the gas, and adding, "Now I know you 'll be glad to get into bed. You 'll be afraid to be stumbling about in the dark."

"O dear! If you had only waited until I 'd looked under the bed, I 'd felt easy. Please let me light up another minute, Solomon!" pleaded Mrs. Nancy.

"No, not for a second! Nancy, if you had your usual good sense, you would know a man could not be under this bed without he crawled there and remained flat on his stomach all the time."

"That 's just the reason he would get there, thinking we would never look for him in such a place. I 've always looked under the bed ever since I had one," Nancy said, crying.

"Yes; looking for robbers. People generally find, some time or other, what they are all the time hunting for. I believe you would rather find one than not!"

"Indeed I would, if there was one to find, and feel decidedly more comfortable than letting him, when he finds us asleep, find all the money and silver we have got. May I look under the bed, Solomon?"

"No. I 'll have my way this time, and not yours, Mrs. Stearns. Now go to sleep."

"Indeed I can't," answered Nancy.

But she was very tired, and it was not long before her husband knew her fears were surely quieted. Then Solomon chuckled to himself, saying:

"I 've seen enough of the folly of letting a woman have her way lately, and I 'm going to turn over a new leaf."

And so, rejoicing in the consciousness of having done a good thing, Solomon Stearns sank to peaceful slumbers.

Now neither Mr. Stearns nor Nancy were sound sleepers, but somehow that night they *did* sleep long and sound, and not until the door bell had been pulled violently three or four times, accompanied by loud rapping, did Mrs. Nancy open her eyes. Then, instead of quickly starting up, she rubbed her eyes, yawned, stretched herself, and rubbed her eyes again. Another ring, with its accompaniment, brought her to a sitting posture, and she called:

"Solomon! Dear me, how we have overslept ourselves! There is the milk boy. Solomon, I say!"

It took considerable shaking to bring up Solomon, and then he muttered something about making him get up when he had not gotten half sleep enough.

"But don't you hear the milk boy? We have overslept ourselves dreadfully."

"I guess not, Nancy. Let 's see."

The old-fashioned watch which hung by the bureau was consulted, and Solomon said:

"Now I did think I wound her up. But I must have forgotten it. She stopped at five minutes of twelve."

Down into his pant's pocket he thrust his hand to draw forth his watch key. With a look of mingled doubt and fright, he turned to his wife. She was gazing wildly at the watch.

"Ah, now, Nancy, you 've been playing a trick on me!" Solomon said.

"What do you mean? But see there," pointing to the watch, and looking wildly from that to her husband's face.

"What do *you* mean?"

"The watch an't stopped. It 's going," gasped Nancy, darting to the window and throwing open the blinds.

The sun shone in, strong and bright, casting a straight shadow across the floor.

Solomon was looking then terrified and wild enough. Nancy repeated:

"It 's going, I say."

"It 's *gone*, I tell you!"

"Gone! What 's gone?"

"The money!"

"Oh! good mercy! I told you we 'd be murdered and robbed!" Nancy exclaimed.

"Haven't you been trying me, Nancy? O yes, you have. See there; you have been up before. The door is ajar. I fastened it the last thing."

"Solomon Stearns, we have been murdered and robbed!—I mean chloroformed. Pugh! don't you smell the pisen stuff? Oh, Lord! I knew it! I felt it!" groaned Nancy.

There was no longer a doubt of the truth. Both the smell of chloroform and its effect were too manifest.

"How could any one have gotten in? And where could he have hid? You looked everywhere."

"No, I didn't! I can't tell how any one got in. But I know just where they hid; where you wouldn't let me look—under the bed," answered Nancy.

And down on her hands and knees she went then, to look under the bed. An instant after, and she cried out, in a voice which sounded rather triumphant to Solomon:

"Just as I said. See here!" and she held up a pair of false whiskers.

"Look and see who is at the door ringing the bell so," said Solomon.

Nancy, looking out the window, replied:

"It is the boy from the office."

"Throw him the keys, and say I 'm not well, but will be over in an hour or so," Solomon said.

When they went down stairs, they found all the back part of the house open. The boy had left the milk hours before. Nancy hurried up a cup of coffee, after which her husband hastened to the office, stopping by the bank, and drawing from his little savings enough to replace the lost money.

It was a severe blow to him, but from which his worthy wife could and did draw a little mite of consolation. From that time to this, she has been allowed to look up the chimneys, into closets, and even under the bed, to her heart's content; her husband having come to the conclusion, that it is just as well to let a woman have her way.

OH, HAPPY ARE WE—SO FREE, SO FREE!

BY CALEB DUNN.

Down by the river the willow stands,
Weeping, yet smiling in the sun,
While the south wind's warm and odorous hands
Through the leaves their fingers run.
Up in the branches the oriole sings,
Like the proudest and noblest of feathered kings,
While his mate aloft on a lithe limb swings,
And sweetly says,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

Under that tree by the river side,
Many, aye, many a year ago,
I sat with my loved and loving bride,
And watched the water flow
Onward toward the distant main,
As our lives, which were then unknown to pain,
Flowed on to the future we hoped to gain,
When we might sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

An age with its history has come and gone
Since together we watched the tide,
And sorrow has touched with a sombre tone
My heart and the heart of my bride;
We have reached the future we longed to know,
We have pleasures found and learned of woe;
But now, when the evening breeze breathes low,
We fondly sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

The twilight paints with a purple hue
The hills where the parting kiss
Of the sun, in a golden and scarlet adieu,
Melts in a dream of bliss;
We watch the sky as its lamps awake,
And while the heavens, like a luminous lake,
In waves of glory over us break,
We gladly sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

Free from the ills which often assail,
Free from the shafts of care,
Free from misfortune's terrible gale,
Free from the work of despair;
Free from the evil of wrong and sin,
Free to do good and its work to begin,
Free to love God and His blessing to win;
Free ever to sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

* * *

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE FINAL MOVE IMPENDING.

The young Lord Towyn came into his sitting-room and the presence of his friends like a sunny south breeze, all hopefulness and gladness. He found Sir Harold walking the floor, his head bowed upon his breast, his face ghastly pale, his eyes haggard, his mind bordering upon distraction. The father's anxieties concerning his missing daughter were almost more than the overstrung brain and tortured heart could bear.

Mr. Atkins stood at the window, sullenly despairing.

Ryan, completely at his wit's end, sat before the blazing fire in a crouching attitude, and with crestfallen visage.

Sir Harold, Atkins and Ryan turned, as by one impulse, toward the young Earl, as he bounded lightly into the room. Their eyes expressed their wonder at the change a few hours had wrought in him.

"You look like incarnate sunshine, Arthur," said the Baronet sadly. "Ah, the elastic spirit of youth!"

The young lord laughed joyously, his fair face aglow with the gladness that filled his being. He took off his greatcoat and hat, great drops of sleet or rain falling from it, and shook himself, as he said:

"There 's a mist beginning to fall. We shall have a wet day to-morrow."

Sir Harold looked more keenly at the young Earl, and a sudden excitement possessed him.

"What has happened, Arthur?" he demanded. "You have news of Neva?"

The glad smiles rippled like waves of sunlight over the young lord's mouth, and a joyous light danced in his blue eyes.

"Yes," he said, "I have news of Neva."

In an instant, Sir Harold, Atkins and Ryan crowded around our hero, all eagerness and excitement.

"Is she here, at Inverness?" cried Atkins. "Have you seen her?"

"No; she is hidden among the Highlands, up in Ross and Cromarty. She is safe and well."

"But how do you know it?" demanded Ryan, full of professional zeal and jealousy at once.

Lord Towyn took in his own the right hand of Sir Harold and pressed it, as he answered gravely:

"I have seen Craven Black!"

A series of exclamations burst from the Earl's hearers. Sir Harold Wynde trembled like a leaf, and turned his back upon the keen-eyed detective.

"Black is here?" ejaculated Ryan, all thoughts of "the mysterious Mr. Hunlow" lost in his sudden amazement. "Then our trip to Scotland was not a wild-goose chase, after all? Tell me where he is, my lord;" and Ryan took a step toward the door.

"Leave the management of the affair to me for the present, Ryan," said Lord Towyn. "You have placed us on the right track, and you shall have all the credit for doing so, but we want no arrests, no noise, no scandal. The matter must be hushed up for family reasons. No whisper must go forth to the world of the wickedness of Lady Wynde. The failure of the conspirators must be their punishment."

"Yes, yes," said Sir Harold. "The Earl is right. There must be no scandal."

The detective shot a keen glance at the Baronet, whose back was still toward him.

"I have discovered," continued Lord Towyn, "that Craven Black has an old house up in the Highlands, and that he has Neva there in close imprisonment. Neva has all the courage for which we gave her credit, and holds out stoutly against her enemies. Black apprehends a long stay in the Highlands while reducing her to subjection, and has come to Inverness to-day for winter stores. His yacht lies in the river, and he will be off at daybreak."

"What are we to do?" exclaimed Atkins. "He will escape us. It will be necessary to arrest him."

"I have made all the preparations for pursuit," replied our hero. "I have a sloop, provisioned and ready, in which we will follow the yacht. We will dine here, and at a late hour this evening we will go aboard our vessel. We must be off in the morning, soon after the yacht."

Sir Harold plied the Earl with questions, and the latter told the tale of his day's adventures at full length.

At six o'clock, dinner was served in their sitting-room. After dinner they talked for hours, and at ten o'clock that evening they quitted their hotel and went down to the wharf.

A fine mist was falling. The river was shrouded in darkness, but watery gleams of light came from the yacht and the other vessels lying in the river. The wind was still strong and free, blowing in fitful gusts.

The party had hardly come to a halt upon the wharf, when a small boat manned by two rowers shot out of the gloom, and ran alongside the landing-place.

"Is it you, Macdonald?" asked the young Earl, bending forward and straining his eyes through the darkness.

"Aye, aye, sir. Is it you, my lord?" said Macdonald, in a loud whisper, rising in the boat.

"You are on time," said Lord Towyn. "The clock is striking the hour at this moment."

The Earl assisted Sir Harold into the boat, and sprang in after him. Atkins and Ryan followed, and the boat shot out again into the stream. A vigorous row of several minutes on the part of the brothers Macdonald, brought the party alongside *The Lucky*, and they climbed to her deck. The boat was drawn up and secured to the davits.

The young Earl led the way out of the wet and gloom down into the cabin. There was no fire here, but a lantern hung from the ceiling, shedding a bright light upon the table and the bench around it. The air was chilly, and the small cabin, despite its snugness, had the comfortless appearance usual to a ship's cabin.

"It 's cold here," said the elder Macdonald, the captain of the sloop. "I 'll just mix you a punch. There 's nothing like a good punch to keep the rheumatiz out of one's bones."

He brought from the pantry a spirit lamp, which he lighted. Over this, upon a light frame-work, he placed a tea-kettle. Then he brought out an immense bowl and ladle, a netted bag full of lemons, a tin can of sugar, various spices, and a jug of Scotch whisky. When the water in the tea-kettle boiled, he rolled up his sleeves and set to work, concocting a punch which proved a success. The four passengers, as well as the two Macdonalds, did full justice to the warming beverage.

About eleven o'clock Sir Harold Wynde was persuaded to retire to a state-room and berth, but he did not sleep. A host of anxieties pressed upon him, and he tossed for hours on his hard bed, the prey of a torturing anguish.

Atkins and Ryan went to bed, and to sleep. Lord Towyn went out upon the deck, and walked to and fro with Macdonald, whom he found to be a shrewd, kindly Scotsman, and he told him enough concerning the misdeeds of Craven Black, and the abduction of Miss Wynde, to interest him personally in the restoration of Neva to her friends.

"We must keep an eye upon the yacht all night," said the Earl. "She may creep out in the darkness, and if she attempts that, we will creep after. I know the route she will take, but I prefer to arrive at the inland loch not an hour behind her."

"I will keep watch," said Macdonald. "You ought to get a little sleep, my lord."

"I cannot sleep," answered Lord Towyn, more to himself than to his new ally. "My veins seem full of quicksilver to-night, rather than full of blood. So near to her—so near!"

He paced the deck alone in the mist and the darkness. Around him the watery gleams of light flickered upon the river, and from the wharves other watery gleams strayed, looking like reflections of the first. The bells rang the hours with muffled clangor. A strange ghostliness fell upon the dark river and the sleeping city.

All through the night Lord Towyn continued his weary tramping to and fro upon the deck. One of the Macdonalds shared his vigil; the other slept.

The Arrow lay quietly at her moorings throughout the night, but at daybreak signs of activity were seen upon her deck. The morning had not fairly dawned when the yacht slipped out of the stream, heading toward Moray Frith.

The breeze was favorable to her progress, without being astern, and she bowled away at a fine rate of speed. The young Earl, looking through a sea glass, could distinguish four figures upon the deck of *The Arrow*, and one of these he recognized as that of Craven Black.

"Shall we shake out the sails, my lord?" asked the elder Macdonald. "The yacht goes well, but I fancy we might show her the heels of *The Lucky* in a fair race. We can keep her in sight the whole distance."

"That won't do, Macdonald. Black must not suspect he 's followed. This mist is like a vail, and will conceal us if we keep at a reasonable distance behind. Let him get half way to Fort George, and then we will start."

In good time, when *The Arrow* had made about the distance indicated as desirable, *The Lucky* slipped from her moorings, and shaking out her sails as a bird shakes its wings, she flew onward over the waters in pursuit.

The sloop was half-way to the fort, and the yacht was out of sight, when the Baronet, fully dressed, and showing by his haggard face that he had not slept during the night, came out upon the deck.

The young Earl took Sir Harold's arm and they walked the deck together, conversing in low tones.

A little later, Mr. Atkins and Ryan appeared, and the four passengers adjourned to the cabin, where the younger Macdonald, who acted as steward, had set out upon the cabin table a formidable array of cold meats, bread, biscuits, and fruits, both fresh and preserved. A pot of hot coffee had also been provided, and a bowl of hot punch was ready for those who preferred it.

After breakfast, the passengers returned to the deck.

They passed Fort George in good time, and came out into the rougher waters of the Moray Frith. Here their progress was less rapid. *The Lucky* lurched somewhat; but when she turned into the straits, and finally emerged into the smoother waters of Cromarty Frith, she was moving as steadily, although by no means as swiftly, as a bird upon the wing.

The Arrow was out of sight, and Macdonald crowded on all the sail the small sloop would bear. It was well he did so, for as the day wore on the wind grew shifty, and sometimes blew dead ahead, and the average rate of speed up the Cromarty Frith did not exceed four miles an hour.

It was after midday when they turned into the river which led to the loch of the Wilderness. Lord Towyn recognized the stream by the description that had been given him, and unhesitatingly directed an advance. Sir Harold and Mr. Atkins had many misgivings as the sloop crept slowly up the river, a mere deep cut between high hills, their progress like the snail's, but they did not venture to express it to their hopeful and confident young guide.

As the stream grew narrower their misgivings increased, and the young Earl read their thoughts in their grave faces.

"Courage!" he said, approaching the Baronet. "It is true we barely creep along here, and the day is wearing on, but the yacht has had to go slowly here also, and cannot be more than an hour in advance of us."

"But, Arthur," suggested the Baronet, giving voice to his apprehensions, "suppose that the man of the yacht deceived you as to the proper route, or that we have taken the wrong course in running up this river? I can't believe that any one can make a cut in the hills like this one an approach even to a Highland stronghold. No wind can strike our sails, or so little, at any rate, that we could easily walk faster than we sail, if only we had a level road to walk on. And if we *are* upon the wrong tack, what will become of Neva, my poor wronged little Neva?"

His voice trembled as he asked the question.

"I know we are going straight to her, Sir Harold," said the Earl hopefully. "Believe and trust in my convictions. You may smile at the idea, but I feel that I am getting nearer and nearer to Neva with every inch we gain."

The night closed in early in that wild Highland region, a night of wind and mist. Not a light gleamed from the deck of *The Lucky*, as she felt her way between the narrowing rocks. About six o'clock of the early evening, she glided from the narrow river with a sudden bound, as a puff of wind filled her flapping sails, into the hidden loch of the Wilderness.

The yacht lay at anchor at the further side of the loch, and a mile away. A lantern hung at her masthead, and the forms of men were seen in the spectral glare, moving hurriedly to and fro on her deck.

"We have come to the right place, you see," said Lord Towyn exultantly. "This is the loch. Yonder lies the yacht, but recently come in. The men are busy unloading their purchases."

Sir Harold and Atkins swept the bold and rocky shores with their keen glances. The rugged steeps were black and bare, and in the dense gloom they saw no gleaming lights, no signs of habitation.

"We must come to anchor up in the deeper shadow of this overhanging cliff," said Lord Towyn.

The order was obeyed.

"Now lower a boat," said the Earl. "We will go ashore."

The boat was lowered; the two Macdonalds and the four passengers entered it, and the boat was rowed toward the yacht, keeping close to the black shore.

As they drew near, a row-boat was seen to shoot away from the yacht. The Macdonalds held their oars uplifted until the yacht's boat had grounded on the shore, and the three seamen belonging to the yacht had landed. Two of the three employes of Craven Black loaded themselves with hampers and parcels, and the third preceded them up the steep and circuitous path in the mountain side, bearing a lantern which he swung at his side.

"They are all gone up the cliff," said the Earl. "No one is left to watch the shore. Strike out, men. Let us land and follow them up the mountain. The man with the lantern shall guide us as well as his comrades."

To say was to do. The sloop's boat speedily grounded on the strip of beach, and Lord Towyn leaped out and sought for the entrance to the narrow path up which the three figures were slowly climbing, one still waving his light. The path was found. The Earl bade the boatmen wait, and the four men, Lord Towyn, Sir Harold Wynde, Mr. Atkins and Ryan, glided up the path toward the Wilderness like so many shadows.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE END OF THE GAME.

The yacht had arrived at the loch at the foot of Wilderness mountain just as the dusk was falling. Craven Black had immediately gone ashore in the mist and gloom, climbed the rugged steep, and hastened to his temporary home. The windows were all uncurtained, and a broad stream of watery light penetrated for a little distance into the darkness. There was no sound of barking of dogs, and the silence struck upon Craven Black's ears strangely. The front door stood wide open, but no one was in the hall.

He entered the house and looked into the drawing-room. Mrs. Artress was there, pale and perturbed, a restless spark in her ashen eyes, and disorder in her attire. She uttered an exclamation as she beheld Mr. Black, and sprang toward him, exclaiming:

"I am so glad you are come, Craven. Have you got the medicines for Octavia?"

"Yes. How is she?"

"I don't know. I am very anxious about her. She looks like death, and her breathing is very strange. She won't lie down, but just wanders about the house like some restless ghost. I think that her lungs are congested, and that she is in serious danger. I really think you ought to take her to Inverness and put her in a physician's care. What if she should die in this remote Wilderness?"

"She won't die while she is able to 'wander about the house,'" responded Craven Black lightly. "When people are seriously ill they take to their beds. Why are the dogs shut up?"

"Octavia ordered it. She could not bear their noise; it drove her wild, she said."

"Humph. Nervous. She will be better of her cold in a day or two. How is Miss Wynde?"

"She is still obstinate, Craven, and never says a word against her starvation diet. I am afraid we 've made a serious mistake in our estimate of her. She is what you sometimes call 'game all through.' She'll die, but she won't give in. I wish we had let her alone, and allowed her to marry whom she pleased. That escapade of hers on the mountain may cost Octavia her life. And if Octavia dies, her four thousand a year dies too, and I shall have to become a companion to some lady, and lead a horrible life of dependence and fear, and you will have to go back to your precarious existence."

"You are a pleasant comforter," said Craven Black impatiently. "All these horrors exist only in your imagination. Octavia will outlive us all. Where is she?"

"In her own room."

Black ran up the stairs to his wife's room. He found Octavia standing before the fire, clad in a loose wrapper, whose bright hue made her pallid face look hideous. Her eyes were strangely large, and they were thrown into relief by heavy black circles under them. Her long black hair hung loosely down her back. She looked thin and old and spectral, all the brightness and beauty gone from her. Her features were hard in their expression, and the wicked soul declared itself plainly in her unlovely countenance.

Craven Black recoiled at sight of her. How two or three days had changed her! He felt a sudden repugnance to her. He had a horror of weakness and illness, and a fear came over him that his cousin's terrors might not be without foundation.

"Oh, it 's you, Craven?" cried Octavia, in a thin, querulous voice. "How long you have stayed. Did you get my medicine?"

"Yes, here it is," and Black produced a bottle from his pocket. "It 's a cough mixture."

"I feel such a tightness here," and Octavia put her hand upon her chest. "Such a horrible restriction. I dare say, though, it will be all right in the morning. I remember, Craven, you hate sick people. Your dinner is waiting. Let us go down."

"You had better go to bed," said Craven abruptly.

"I cannot lie down. My chest pains me when I attempt it. Had you good luck at Inverness?"

Craven Black assented.

"Did you see any one you knew?"

"No; how should I? None of my acquaintances come to the Highlands in November. I was as unrecognized at Inverness as I should be in Patagonia. I will change my clothes and take you down to dinner."

He went into his dressing-room and changed his garments. Octavia paced the room restlessly during his absence. He returned in the course of some minutes and escorted his wife down to the dining-room, where Mrs. Artress joined them.

He noticed that Octavia ate nothing at the meal. She complained of a lack of appetite, and moved restlessly in her chair, starting at every sound.

"I have read of the ancients placing a death's head at their feasts," said Black grimly, "and I seem to have followed their custom. Octavia, do try to look like something better than a galvanized corpse."

Octavia arose and went to the window, a spasm of pain convulsing her hard features. The heartless mockery of her confederate in guilt smote upon her in that hour of suffering like an avenging sword. How she had loved him, and had sinned for him! And this was her reward!

Craven Black finished his dinner quietly, and drank his wine. Then he arose with an air of gayety, and said:

"I have everything you sent for, Octavia, and some things you neglected to send for. We can stand a siege in this old house all winter, if need be. The boys are already bringing up the hampers. Will you have a look at them?"

Octavia assented with a heavy sigh, and passed out into the front hall with Craven Black and Mrs. Artress.

The three seamen stood in the hall, one with a lantern in his hand, the other two in the act of depositing their hampers upon the floor.

And over the edge of the plateau at that very moment, and not a score of rods distant, four men were coming silently and slowly, with stern faces and cautious mien, toward the house.

"That is right," said Craven Black, examining the hampers. "Bring up the wine baskets next."

The three men went out. The four pursuers stood in the shadow of the trees as they passed, and then resumed their approach to the dwelling.

"I 'd like to see how the girl stands her imprisonment," said Craven Black. "I 'll let her know that we are prepared to spend the winter here. By the way, Octavia, I posted that second letter to Brussels to-day, addressed, under cover of a letter to Celeste's sister, to Lord Towyn. We have nicely hoodwinked the Earl, and I should like the girl to know of our successful manœuvres. Where is Celeste?"

"In Neva's ante-room."

"Come then. We will visit our prisoner."

He went up stairs, Octavia following slowly, assisted by Mrs. Artress. Celeste sat at work in the ante-room of Neva's chamber, and admitted the visitors into Neva's presence, entering with them.

And outside the house, upon the lawn, the four shadows came nearer and yet nearer. They flitted up the steps of the porch, and in at the open door. They paused a moment in the deserted lower hall, and then, hearing voices above, came silently and darkly up the stairs, and paused at the door of the ante-room.

That room was deserted. The light streamed from the inner room, where Neva and her enemies were grouped. The sound of voices came out to the intruders. Softly, with sternly eager faces, the four crept across the floor of the ante-room, and two—Sir Harold Wynde and Lord Towyn—looked in upon the Blacks and their young victim.

The Earl breathed hard, and would have leaped in like a lion to the rescue of his betrothed and to the confusion of his enemies, but Sir Harold Wynde held him back with a grasp of iron. The Baronet meant to learn the falseness and perfidy of the wife he had so idolized and trusted, from her own lips.

And with what unconscious frankness she bared her guilty soul to his scrutiny! How completely she revealed her wickedness to him!

At the moment the intruders looked in with burning eyes upon them, Octavia was speaking. Neva stood up near the fire, very pale and slender and fragile of figure, as her father and lover saw with swelling hearts, but her red-brown eyes glowed with the light of an undying courage, her head was poised haughtily upon her slender throat, and her lips were curled in a smile of dauntless defiance.

"You see, Craven," Octavia was saying querulously. "We have starved the girl; we have fed her for weeks on bread and water, until her bodily strength must be nearly gone, and yet she stands there and defies us. What are we to do with her?"

"Miss Wynde does not sufficiently realize her own helplessness and our power," said Craven Black. "Your friends think you travelling with us upon the Continent, Miss Neva. I have posted to-day a letter apparently in your handwriting, under cover to a friend in Brussels, who will post it back to England. That letter is addressed to Lord Towyn. How he will kiss and caress it, and wear it in his bosom, never doubting that you wrote it. I shall send him another letter next week, in your name, breaking your engagement with him."

The young Earl made a slight movement, but Sir Harold held him still in a grip of iron.

Neva's pure, proud face flushed with scorn of her enemies.

"You may send as many letters as you please to Lord Towyn," she said haughtily, "but you will not deceive him so readily as you did me with that letter purporting to come from papa. Oh, Octavia, I am glad papa never lived to know you as you are, base, treacherous, and full of double-dealing! It is well for him that he did not live, for you would have broken his noble heart. He loved and trusted you, and you have repaid him by oppressing his daughter whom he loved."

The hard, haggard features of Octavia distorted themselves in a sneer.

The Baronet wondered with a sudden horror if this was the woman he had loved. She looked a very Medusa to him now.

"Your father! Your 'poor papa!'" mocked Octavia, with her hand upon her chest. "You have flung Sir Harold's name and memory at me ever since we came to this place. And what was Sir Harold? A mere Moneybags to me, that 's all. If you hope to move me to pity you, you couldn't use a worse name to give effect to your appeal than the name of your father. I never loved Sir Harold Wynde, but I married him because he was rich. You needn't look so horrified. People marry for such reasons every day, but they have not my frankness to avow it. There stands the man whom I have loved for years," and she pointed at Craven Black. "It is his son whom I intend you shall marry—"

"To enrich you, madam!" cried Neva.

"Yes, to enrich me, since you say so!" exclaimed Octavia. "You have seventy thousand pounds a year; I have four thousand. I intend to equalize matters before you and I separate. Craven has just returned from Inverness with household stores sufficient to last us through the winter, and we shall stay here till spring, if necessary to compel you to accede to our wishes. Your fare, every day through this winter, until you yield to us, shall be bread and water. I warn you not to carry your resistance too far, for I may be moved to deprive you of a fire."

Neva's lovely face continued to glow with her haughty scorn.

"You seem to think that I am deserted by God and man, and completely given over to you," she cried. "You are mistaken. God has not deserted me. And I can assure you, Craven and Octavia Black, that before many weeks—before many days perhaps—Lord Towyn will trace me to this place and rescue me from your hands."

"Let him come!" sneered Craven Black. "Let him come!"

"Yes," mocked Octavia, "let him come!"

Lord Towyn broke from the grasp Sir Harold still held upon him, and stalked into the chamber.

With a shriek of delight, loud and piercing, Neva flew to his arms.

He held her clasped to his breast and backed toward the door, coming to a halt, looking at Neva's enemies with stern, accusing eyes.

Craven Black, Octavia, Mrs. Artress and Celeste stared at him appalled. Not one could speak, but Octavia's hand clutched at her chest with sudden frenzy.

"Lord Towyn!" gasped Mrs. Artress at last, faintly.

Craven Black broke forth into curses. His hand flew to his breast pocket, but fell again, as the door pushed open and Mr. Atkins and Ryan the detective entered the room.

"By Heaven, the game is up!" he cried.

"Yes," said our young hero, "the game is up. You have played a daring game, Craven Black, and you have lost it."

Octavia gasped for breath. The bitterness of defeat was almost more than she could bear. The sight of Neva in the arms of her lover nearly goaded her to madness.

"Yes, the game is up," she said hollowly. "I suppose that you traced Craven here from Inverness; but how did you get upon our trail? How did you happen at Inverness? No matter. I do not care to know just yet. You cannot prosecute us, Lord Towyn, if you care to preserve your bride's family name from scandal. I was Sir Harold Wynde's wife, and that fact must shield me and my friends. You cannot take from me my jointure of four thousand a year, and with that Craven and I need not suffer, especially as we have the Wynde Heights estate. The game is up, Lord Towyn, as you say, but we are not discomfited nor overthrown. You will keep silence for the sake of the family. Besides, you know I am Neva's personal guardian, and had a right to take her where I please."

"That remains to be seen," said the young Earl sternly. "Neva, darling, look up. I have news for you."

Neva slowly lifted her pale, joyous face from her lover's bosom, and stood a little way from him, eager, expectant, and wondering.

"My poor little girl!" said the young Earl, with an infinite yearning. "How you have suffered! I have brought you very startling news, and you will need all your bravery to bear it. Give me your hands—so! Neva, I have news from India."

Something in his tone startled the girl. Her face grew paler on the instant.

"Yes, Arthur," she said softly. "You have heard more about his death—poor papa!"

"A gentleman has come from India," said the Earl, telling the story much as Atkins had told it to him, "and he says—can you bear to hear it, darling?—he says that Sir Harold did not die out there at all: that he was attacked by a tiger, but was rescued by his Hindoo servant, who sent him away into the mountains in the care of other Hindoos, who kept Sir Harold a captive. And he says that Sir Harold is alive and well to-day."

"Oh, Arthur, Arthur! Can it be?" cried Neva, trembling. "My poor father! I dreamed that he still lived, and my dream has come true. We will start for India at once, and rescue papa. Oh, Arthur, do you think it is true?"

"Yes, my darling, I believe it."

"Well, I don't!" sneered Craven Black, turning pale nevertheless. "Such trumpery tales are common enough. Look at Livingstone. He 's been said to be dead these several years, but every little while the newspapers resurrect him. I *know* Sir Harold is dead!"

"And I know it," scoffed Octavia. "Alive, after an absence of so long duration! Bah! I wonder you haven't more sense, Lord Towyn. Sir Harold Wynde alive! I should like to see him!"

The door swung slowly on its hinges, and Sir Harold Wynde walked into the room. He paused near the door, and surveyed his false wife with stern and awful eyes.

Octavia gave utterance to a frightful scream—whose horror was indescribable—and bounded forward, her hand upon her breast, and fell to the floor upon her face.

Sir Harold's awful gaze turned upon Craven Black, and seemed to turn that individual to stone. It rested upon Artress, and she cowered before it in terror. It passed over the French woman, and fixed itself upon Neva, softening and melting to almost more than human tenderness and love, and then, with a great joy shining in his keen blue eyes, he opened wide his arms. Neva sprang forward, and was clasped close to his great heart.

The sacred joy of that reunion need not be dwelt upon.

Presently, as Sir Harold was about to lead his daughter from the room, his glance rested upon the still prostrate figure of Octavia.

"Look to your wife, Mr. Black," he said; his irony arousing Black from his stupor. "She has fainted!"

Craven Black obeyed the voice of command, essaying to lift the prostrate figure of Octavia, but with a cry of horror he let it fall again, shouting hoarsely:

"She 's dead! Octavia is dead!"

It was true. The engorged lungs had ceased their work. The heart had stopped its beating.

That night, the yacht and the sloop started upon their return to Inverness. In the former were Craven Black, dispirited and despairing; Mrs. Artress, full of bewailings for the poverty into which she was now plunged; the French maid; the dead body of the false Octavia, and the three sailors in Black's employ.

In the sloop were Neva and her friends.

The two vessels arrived safely at Inverness, and the remains of Lady Wynde were consigned to the grave. Craven Black did not wait to see the last rites performed for her who had served his wicked purposes so faithfully and so well, but, abandoning his cousin, put to sea in his yacht with the three sailors, not caring whither he went.

A week later, the wreck of the yacht was found upon the north German coast, and four bodies were washed ashore, two still living, two dead. And of the dead, one was identified, from the papers on his person, as Craven Black.

Sir Harold, with his daughter and his friends, returned to Hawkhurst. The story of Sir Harold's return to England had preceded them, and from the moment that the party alighted at the Canterbury station until after their arrival at their own home, Sir Harold received one continual ovation. The tenantry of Hawkhurst turned out in a body to welcome home their beloved landlord. The joy bells were rung in the little village of Wyndham, and guns were fired. It was a day long to be remembered throughout that part of Kent.

The shadow that had fallen on Sir Harold's life when he first learned the baseness of his second wife, was dispelled by the tender love and attentions of Neva and her young lover. The smiles came back to his lips and the joy to his heart, and he learned the lesson that many must learn, that life need not be all dark and desolate because one friend of the many has proved false.

A few months later the joy bells rang again, and again the tenantry of Sir Harold made merry. The occasion was the marriage of the heiress of Hawkhurst to the young Lord Towyn. It was a joyous bridal. Sir John Freise and wife, and their seven daughters, were there. Mr. Atkins' plain face beamed from the midst of the throng. Rufus Black and his gipsy-faced young wife, both happy and loving, had come down from Mount Street to grace the wedding, and no congratulations to the young bridal pair were more sincere than those uttered by Rufus.

At the wedding breakfast, while Neva, fair and proud, and radiant as a star, sat beside her equally radiant young bridegroom, Rufus Black found opportunity to speak a word privately to the bride.

"It has all ended as it ought to, Miss Neva—my lady, I mean," he whispered joyously. "Your father has got over his disappointment and grief, and looks like a king, as he stands yonder. I am getting to be a *man*—an honest, upright, strong-souled man, with genuine backbone and downright vim. Lally believes in me, you see, and upholds me, God bless her. And you and the Earl are as happy as angels, Miss Ne—my lady, and you deserve to be. Mrs. Artress is a governess—where do you think?—oh, divine justice!—in the house of the Blights at Canterbury! What worse could we wish her? Our enemies—they were mine as well as yours, Lady Towyn—played a daring game, and they lost it!"

THE END.

The following is the title of a new story by our distinguished contributor, Mrs. LEWIS, the publication of which we shall commence in our next number:

A BONE OF CONTENTION;

OR,

THE WALDEMAR SUCCESSION.

Like all of Mrs. Lewis's stories, it is full of interest, and cannot fail to please our readers. Indeed, Mrs. Lewis's stories of English society are always popular. They are invariably republished in England—stolen from the *Ledger*, without credit.

* * *

THE NEW CUT.

The following has lain in my scrap-book for more than a score of years, but it is just as true and just as applicable now as it was in the earlier time:

An old clergyman, whose beadle was by trade a tailor, was returning from church with his man in company. This beadle was as old as his master, and had served him many years, and between the two a strong friendship, as well as mutual sympathy and understanding, existed.

"Thomas," said the clergyman, addressing his faithful officer, "I cannot tell how it is that our congregation should be getting thinner and thinner, while Saint Peter's is more than holding its own. I am sure I preach as well as ever I did, and I certainly have far more experience than I had when I first came among you."

"Indeed, sir," replied the beadle, with a meditative shake of the head, "now-a-days old ministers are like old tailors. My customers are dropping off also. I am sure I *sew* as well as ever I did, and the *cloth* is as good; but it 's the *cut*, sir,—*it's the new cut that takes!*" C.

SONG OF A HAPPY WIFE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Oh, I am so happy! for he, my own mate,
With success as it grows but grows still more elate
When he thinks how, when over the toil of the day,
He will stride with the news to our dear home away.

For no matter how brilliant his crowns in the mart,
There's a crown richer still in his wife's loving heart;
And the joy of our children at papa's return
Makes the lamp on home's altar in perfectness burn.

If his work is not always rewarded so well,
If misfortune seems weaving a cold, starless spell,
Yet his spirit bears up, all determined to swim,
For he feels his main treasures are here safe for him.

And Oh, how he, too, gives a balm to *my* cares!
How with me disappointment so manfully bears!
And I feel that the breath of good angels is round,
And that life for us all will in Heaven be crowned.

To that Heaven, Oh, thanks that we met, and we knew
That for us the same heart-wedded destiny grew,
From which children should spring, every one a dear flower,
As they have, God's *felt* blessing in Home's sacred bower.

O joy, that each day he more happiness knows;
That he calls me, as called at the first, his own rose;
While to me, for the present and future afar,
His the guiding, the steady, the God-given Star!

MRS. ENTWISTLE'S STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

His name it was Skiver. It was a kind of a singular name, and he was a kind of a singular man. He was fat, and he was short; and he had no more hair on his face than a baby, and very little more on his head. Our boy came into the back room, where I was stoning cherries one day, and says he:

"Mrs. Entwistle, there's a gentleman."

"Where?" say I.

"In the hall," says he.

"Why don't you show him into the parlor?" says I.

"Why, he won't go," says he; "and he says he must see you for a minute."

"Oh," says I. "A bill, no doubt."

So out I walked, and there he stood; and I thought, as I looked at him, "If poor Mrs. Chicory's baby had grown up to be four feet three, and otherwise stayed jest so, he'd a been your very image."

"Air you the lady of the house?" says he.

"I am," says I; "but if it's to subscribe to anything, with butter at the price it is, don't ask me. I'd like a Holy Scripture with illustrations, and I'd like the Fashion Magazine, as well as another; but I can't afford it, and that's a fact. I had a literary taste once, but it's all gone. I'm nothing but sugar and butter and coals and kindling wood inwardly, so don't show 'em to me and aggravate me by 'em; don't, I pray. Subscriptions to books is for them that don't keep boarders."

"Mum," says he, "your words goes to my heart, but it an't my object."

"What is your object then, may I ask, sir?" says I.

"Board, mum," says he.

"Well," says I, "I have a vacancy—but it's on the top floor."

"Any place will do for me," says he. "A poor, deserted critter like me."

And two tears came into his eyes.

"Perhaps he really *is* a baby," says I to myself. "A giant baby."

"Deserted!" says I.

"Yes 'm," says he. "She went off and left me a Wednesday night without my supper."

"Your ma?" says I.

"No 'm," says he. "A holier tie, if possible. My ma' would never have done such a thing. My wife, mum."

"The abandoned critter," says I.

"No 'm," says he. "Wirtue itself; a most a respectable woman; a lady, when I married her, as supported herself upright and noble with a sewing machine. No names, mum, if you please."

"What did she go off then for?" says I. "A married woman's place is in her husband's home. Had you words?"

"*She* had a few, mum; a good many, I may say," said the gentleman; "but I gin her none back. She had her reasons for leaving. If I may confide in you, mum, she was jealous."

"Jealous!" said I. "No doubt you gave her cause. Men always do."

"As sure as my name is Skiver," said the gentleman, "I'm as innocent as the babe unborn. She would set at the winder, and her form was fine; but I didn't so much as mention it to Jane Amelia, and I was only—excuse me for alluding to it—I was only a blowing of my nose, no more, and she waved her handkercher, and Jane Amelia says, says she, 'The end has come at last,' and left me."

"For blowing your nose?" says I.

"Thought it was flirting, you see," says he.

"Oh," says I; "with the person with a fine figure at the opposite window?"

"Yes 'm," says he; "and I'm willing and able to pay; and any hole I can crawl into will do, for life is ended with me, and it's all over."

"Oh, she'll come back," said I. "Why don't you make her?"

"Make Jane Amelia do anything!" says he. "You don't know her."

So he came. And he sat at my table with a very wretched countenance, and Mr. Scrapples, the comic man that writes for the papers, he did ask me, to be sure, "if he'd been sent there to be weaned," for he looked like it.

He eat bread and milk for his breakfast, and he never spoke to anybody; but I felt sorry for him, for my part. And I was just a thinking that it was hard for him to be used so, and that Jane Amelia ought to be ashamed of herself, when I heard a tapping at the window-panes. I forgot to say that it was eleven o'clock at night, and I was mixing my bread in the front basement. "Tap, tap, tap," it came, short and quick—"tap, tap, tap."

"Gracious!" says I. "What is that?"

"It's only me," says a voice outside; "don't be afraid, Mrs. Entwistle. It's only a poor, lone, lorn woman like yourself."

I opened the door and peeped out. The moon was bright, and there stood a woman in a decent calico dress and a big apron and a little shawl and a sun-bonnet.

"May I come in?" says she.

"Who are you?" says I.

"I'm a poor woman," says she, "a looking for a place, and I heard you was a wanting a girl; and says I to myself, I'll offer before she gets another."

"I want a girl, to be sure," says I; "but can you do the work?"

"There's no work I can't do," says she. "Cook, wash, iron, sweep, scrub, wait, odd jobs—anything; and your own wages. What I want is a home."

"References?" says I.

With that she whips off her sun-bonnet, and stands under the gas.

"You jest look at me," says she, "and then see if you want references. Don't I look respectable?"

She did, and I hired her, and she came next morning. And I'll say this, that she was a worker.

She went about it in the big sun-bonnet, with a handkerchief about her face for toothache. And the comic gentleman asked me if she wasn't somebody in disguise. But she worked. She asked questions too.

"Please 'm, can you tell me who that stoutish gentleman that sits at the bottom of the table is?" says she.

"Mr. Dillwin," says I. "You mean the one with the light whiskers?"

"No 'm," says she. "A kind of a good-looking gentleman, with *no* whiskers at all, and pink cheeks."

"Oh!" says I, "that is Mr. Skiver. He's new here."

"A kind of a gay Lothario, an't he?" says she.

"As to that, I don't know," says I. "Has he given you any impudence? Because if he has he goes."

"Never looked at *me*," says she; "but no doubt he's looked enough at that fixy widder with the lot of jet on, and that young Miss in blue; no doubt of that."

"Perhaps you know something about him?" says I.

"No," says she. "How should I?"

"He's a gentleman that is separated from his wife," says I.

"And came here and talked against her," says she.

"No," says I, "not a word. He's the injured one, *I* think. He spoke high of her."

"Oh," says she. Then she washed away for a while. And after a while, she says:

"Spoke high, did he? Ah!"

She didn't speak again until dinner-time, except about the work. Then waiting on the table in her big sun-bonnet, she came out with a saucer in her hand.

"I want a little more pudding," says she.

"One help of pudding ought to do boarders," says I.

Says she:

"It's for Mr. Skiver. He didn't ask for it, but I know he's fond of pudding, and he hardly eat any meat. Poor critter! didn't look at the widder once; no more he didn't at the gal. Looks low-sperited too. Give him my piece, Mrs. Entwistle, if you can't afford no more."

"Such meanness isn't in me, Sally," says I; "but don't let the other boarders see it, if you can help."

That was the beginning of it. After that it went straight on. Sally was as well-behaved a woman as ever I met, otherwise; and she kept her face covered up in her sun-bonnet, and mostly her chin tied up in her handkerchief too, in a way forward pieces don't often do. A pretty face she had too—pretty enough for a woman of her age. But it was as plain as a pikestaff to me that she had fallen in love with Mr. Skiver.

Talk about pity! I pitied him; but I didn't feel as she did. She bought things out of her own money, and took 'em up to his door on a tray—ale and pie, and such. She made his room windows shine, and put clean pillow-cases on four times a week. She blacked his boots and brushed his coat, and laid herself out to make him comfortable. And the fun was she never let him get a glimpse of her face, and she always said, "Mrs. Entwistle sent you this, sir," when she took him up the trays. Other kind of conduct, I'd have you to understand, I'd not have allowed beneath my roof.

So things went on for a spell, and surely Mr. Skiver was a proper man. "Never spoke to the ladies," so Sally said; never seemed to know Sally was alive. The widow called him "Old Sulks," and the daughter called him "Crossness"—that I knew; and Mrs. Henbane, the married lady that flirted with all the boarders, couldn't get a word from him. And one day Sally sets down on a kitchen chair, and pushes her sun-bonnet off, and says she:

"Mrs. Entwistle, mum, that man is the most particular I ever see, and a credit to his sex. Give him shad for dinner."

Now shad at that season, just come in, you know, is too dear for boarders.

Says I, "Sally, how can I afford it?"

Says she, "Send me for it—I'm a rare hand to bargain."

Says I, "Mortal man can't bargain down fresh spring shad."

Says she, "Give me what you can afford, and I'll see."

And I did it. And I know the critter took money of her own to help it out, for finer shad were never stuffed and baked on any table.

When they were all helped I saw Sally standing peeping in at the door, and though I couldn't see her face, I did see she was rubbing her hands in a rejoicing sort of way; and soon she whispered to me:

"An't it nice to see him eat it? I knew that would go down."

And I knew she meant Mr. Skiver. And I was sort of laughing to myself, when suddenly up jumps Mr. Skiver and begins to stamp about the room.

"Oh, what is it?" says I.

"Bone in his throat," said Mr. Dillwin. "That's the worst of shad."

"Ow wow wow!" coughs Mr. Skiver.

"Oh! oh! oh!" screams Sally.

"Take a drink," says I.

"Oh, let me beat you on the back!" cries Sally.

"He's choking to death, I believe," said the widow.

"Let me get out before he does," said Mrs. Henbane.

And there was Mr. Skiver black in the face.

"Run for a doctor," said Mr. Dillwin.

And one of 'em started; but before he was out of the room, Sally had Mr. Skiver on a lounge, and had put her finger into his throat, and was screeching:

"Gag, dear; gag! I'll tickle your throat! Gag, my own blessing, and it will come up. O Lord! *I* cooked the shad! O gracious! I bought it. O goody, goody gracious! I've been the death of him! Gag, ducky diamond! Gag, and it'll come up."

And up it did come, in a minute. And I heard the comic man roar as he rushed up stairs, and I saw Sally make tracks for the kitchen, as well she might.

I followed her. She was sitting on the floor, all covered up by the big sun-bonnet as though it had been a tent.

"Oh, Sally!" says I, "where was your sense of modesty?"

All she did was to groan. And then there came another groan, and there stood Mr. Skiver!

"Mrs. Entwistle, mum," says he, "I've come to say a word."

"Well, sir," says I.

"I must leave, mum," says he.

"Why, sir?" says I.

"It's trying to my feelings to mention it," says he, "but it's the conduct of that person."

"Well, it was singular," says I; "but she did her best for you. You was choking."

"Mum," says he, "I'd rather be choked to death than to be called any female's ducksy diamonds, and her dear.

"I registered a vow, mum, when I was deserted by the female whose esteem I valued, that her unjust suspicions should never be made true; that I should live so as when I met her in Heaven I could say, 'Jane Amelia, true I was, and true I remained. It was your fatal mistake, and I was only blowing of my nose.'

"Now, behold, I am embraced, and called duck and dear, and ducksy diamonds, before a table full of genteel people, to say nothing of one of a malicious turn of mind that writes for papers. So no offence to you. I'm going, mum. Oh!"

He kinder ended off with a howl, and he was staring at something as if he'd seen a ghost.

I looked around. Sally had her bonnet off, and was standing up in the middle of the kitchen.

"Oh!" says he again. "What do I see?"

"Your own Jane Amelia," says she, and throws herself into his arms.

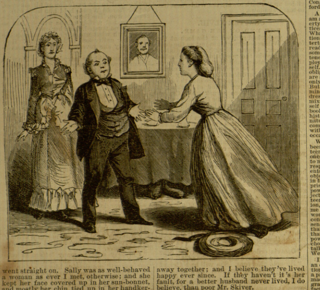
"I came here to watch you," says she. "I hired out here in disguise, and I've tested you, and I know you. There was a mistake on my side, I am well assured. I've got the key in my pocket, and we'll go home together, and I'll never doubt you any more."

Then, looking more like a baby than ever, with the tears running down his face, he looked over her shoulder at me.

"This is my wife, mum," says he.

"So I should hope," says I; "and a big fool she's made of herself."

She didn't say anything, and they went away together; and I believe they've lived happy ever since. If they haven't it's her fault, for a better husband never lived, I do believe, than poor Mr. Skiver.



SCIENCE.

The fact that a man can hold his naked hand in a stream of molten iron without injury has not unnaturally been called a miracle of science. In order to do this, it is only necessary that the whole surface of the hand should be moist with water. The principle on which the skin is protected is identical with that involved in the formation of those little hissing globules so often produced by dropping cold water upon a hot stove, in which case, says Dr. W. B. Carpenter, "the water retains its spherical form, and does not spread upon it and wet it. Vapor is brought to that condition by intense heat, that it forms a sort of film or atmosphere between the hand and the hot iron, and for a time that atmosphere is not too hot to be bearable." Houdin, the well-known conjurer, tried this experiment, after a good deal of persuasion; and he says that "the sensation of immersing his hand in this molten metal was like handling liquid velvet."

Cholera has been very successfully treated, by means of the injection of morphine under the skin, at Hasskien, a village near Constantinople, on the Golden Horn, where there are many English residents. The treatment was first attempted by Dr. John Patterson of the British Seaman's Hospital at Constantinople, who pronounces it more decided in its effect to check the disease than any other treatment he has seen or practised. He long since lost hope of the ordinary treatment ever being of much avail, and now, after having attended upward of a thousand cases of cholera, he is glad to report that the subcutaneous injection of morphine has really been of such great service.

The character of the driftwood picked up in the Polar seas by Artic explorers is of interest and importance, as evidence of the movements of ocean currents in those Northern regions. The fragments of wood and bark found and brought home by the late German expeditions have been examined by botanists, and prove to be chiefly of Siberian origin, although some probably came from the shores of Northern Europe. The yearly rings in the sections of wood are extremely thin, a fact which indicates that the trees to which they belonged grew on the outermost limits of tree vegetation. Most of the specimens were larch and pine.

Even in the matter of washing clothes, the investigations of scientific men have proved to be of considerable practical importance, if we may trust a paper just published in *Le Moniteur Scientifique Quesneville*, a French journal, wherein a writer recommends the following mixture as one which will save clothes from the injurious results produced by the use of soda: two pounds of soap dissolved in five and a half gallons of water, to which add three large tablespoonfuls of ammonia and one of turpentine. Experimenters would do well to try it on a small scale at first.

The rationality of the lower animals was the subject of a lecture recently delivered before the Victoria Institute, London, by the Rev. J. G. Wood, a well-known writer on natural history. He thought that many animals possessed reasoning powers, but only to a very limited extent. In the discussion which followed, the Rev. C. A. Row agreed with the lecturer; but Captain Petrie pointed out that if the animal creation had no rationality it would be without an attribute which helped to make it more subservient to man's wants.

The late Sir John F. W. Herschel has bequeathed to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, fifty copies of his great work on the astronomical observations made by him at the Cape of Good Hope between the years 1835 and 1838. One of these is to be given to the successful student known as the Senior Smith's Prizeman, in each year, until the entire number is exhausted. To those who are so fortunate as to obtain them at all, they will be enhanced in value by the fact that they are the gift of the distinguished author.

The entire Campagna di Roma, as the territory in the vicinity of the city of Rome is termed, comprises over five hundred thousand square acres of land, and yet there is not a town or village upon it, so malarious and unhealthy is the whole district. We learn from a recent Italian publication, that experience shows that persons whose habitual diet is nutritious, with wine, are best able to endure exposure to the miasma of the Roman marshes.

Among the names of the fifteen persons selected for admission this year to the coveted honor of Fellow of the Royal Society—a distinction denoted by the initials F. R. S. attached to the name—only one is familiar to Americans, that of Professor W. Stanley Jevons, the writer on logic and political economy.

Captain Ericsson, in his latest paper on solar heat, insists on the correctness of his previous demonstration, that the temperature of the surface of the sun is at least four millions thirty-six thousand degrees Fahrenheit.

In the treatment of acute rheumatism, the application of ice to the affected joints has been found of great benefit by German physicians.

M. Janssen's spectroscopic observations of the moon show that it cannot have any appreciable atmosphere.

A shoal of fossil fish has been discovered at Puteaux in France.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Justice (Boston) says: "Having seen sound advice in your valuable paper, of which I have been a constant reader since '58, I wish to ask you to let me have a little of it. My case is as follows: I was born in Bavaria, in 1842, and came to this country in 1853. At the breaking out of the war, being a member of a militia company, I entered the service of this government. After the expiration of my first term of enlistment, I reënlisted, and, with my regiment, was stationed at New Orleans, when I received notice that I had been drafted by the Bavarian government, and ordered to report for military duty there. On the strength of this notice, I filed an application for a thirty days' furlough, but was refused, for the reason that Gen. Banks was about to commence his campaign against Port Hudson, and every man was needed. It being impossible for me to report myself as expected, I advised my father—still residing in Bavaria—to furnish me with a substitute, so as to clear himself, as according to the laws of Bavaria, he was responsible for my appearance, and should I fail to report in person or by substitute, his property was liable to confiscation. At the close of the war, I visited my former home, and during my stay corresponded with the American minister at the court of Bavaria, with a view to recover the money paid by my father. After a thorough examination of the case by him, he finally informed me that the only way I could recover the money was by a special act of Congress, as the Bavarian Government would not refund the amount. On my return to this country, I filed a claim at Washington, and was informed by Secretary Seward that the only means of redress lay with Congress. Now what I want to know is: How am I to set to work about it? Do you think a statement of my case, together with the correspondence of the American minister with Gen. Banks, would have any effect; or do you think that Hon. Henry Wilson or Hon. Charles Sumner would be the proper party to apply to?" As you are a resident of Massachusetts, one of the Senators from that State would be the proper person for you to apply to, but it is doubtful if it would do any good. To get a claim through Congress takes more time and money than you can afford to expend for the recovery of any ordinary sum.

A Constant Reader (New York) says: "As I am a reader of your valuable paper, I will take the liberty of troubling you for an answer, through your Notices to Correspondents, of the following questions: What is the best mode of acquiring good conversational powers, so as to make one's self agreeable and entertaining in society? And what are the best works to read that will enrich the mind, and give general ideas? something that will brighten a person up and give a tone to his faculties, that are somewhat dull? I am employed through the day, but have my evenings to myself. By answering these questions you will greatly oblige." Mr. D'Israeli says that "agreeable people" are *those who agree with you*. On this plan you have only to be a good listener, and assent to all you hear. But you had better get the habit of using your own mind, instead of getting bright ideas *put on it*. A tailor dresses a vulgar man in genteel garments, but no one mixes up the clothes and the man. Don't trouble yourself about being bright and agreeable. Read good books and magazines on travel, biography, science, history, and *be* well informed, and then be simple and natural. The greatest bore to be found is the fool who comes into company and trots out the crude knowledge with which he has just "crammed" himself for the occasion.

Woodbridge (Detroit, Mich.) says: "Having been a constant reader of the *Ledger* for the past fifteen years, I trespass on your valuable time just for once, to ask your opinion on a subject of great concern to me. I am in love with a young lady of the highest respectability, good looking, and respectful to her parents. She is respected wherever known, and the only objection I find is an absence of sufficient education—in fact, a great lack of what we think necessary to comprise a lady of education and good conversational powers. The lady is by no means stupid; the only objection I have is her poor education. She is still in her teens; and I therefore beg you to give me your opinion, whether the objections I have stated should make me withhold proposing marriage to her. I believe she would make a good wife. Please reply at your earliest convenience through the *Ledger*." Women of good sense learn what is proper for society far more rapidly than men; and they are none the worse for lacking that noisy chatter which passes for "conversational power." You will probably find in a few years your choice as agreeable and entertaining as the showy talkers who now outshine her. O the bliss of silence! We hope she will have you.

Inquirer (Baltimore) says: "You would oblige an old reader of your paper by giving a little information on the following: namely, Can any person get out a patent of any article of manufacture which has been made several days by others, before the patent is granted, and compel the original makers to stop manufacturing the same? Please do not throw this aside, as it is of much importance to myself." A patent can be obtained of any invention which the Patent Office authorities, on examination of their records, find to be unpatented, if the party applying for the patent furnishes satisfactory grounds for its issue. But persons who were using the invention before the patent was applied for cannot be prevented from continuing in its use, unless it shall appear that such previous use was based on trickery or fraud. A person having a patent can enjoin any one from using it except on the patentee's own terms. He may even enjoin those who were using it before he obtained his patent; and then they must come into court and defend their use of it on the ground of having had it in use before the patent was applied for. This brings up the whole question, and the court and jury, after hearing all the facts, are able to give a just decision in the matter.

Mobile (Ala.) says: "A friend and myself have had a lengthy argument over the meaning of the word *Fourierism*, and finally, at my suggestion, have left it to your decision. By giving an explicit answer, you will greatly oblige." Fourierism is the social system of Fourier, its founder, of Considerant, Lechevallier, Brisbane and others. Fourier was a Frenchman, born in 1772, of great observation and general knowledge, gained as a commercial traveller, soldier, and mercantile clerk, but also of much irregular fancy. His system differs materially from Communism, and is founded, he thought, on fixed and natural principles. But these principles are in his works, crude, fanciful, and without basis in fact, and his whole system, while containing the germs of some good things, is impracticable and revolutionary. It is, moreover, liable to the fatal objection that it contemplates man simply as aiming at luxury, progress and physical enjoyments. The degree of practical wisdom at the basis of his system is illustrated in his theory that the race is in its infancy, and is to last 80,000 years, declining in its old-age. His own life was not a success.

W. H. (New Haven) says: "I am a young man of twenty-two, of average appearance, possessing a little money and a fine education, having just graduated at one of our foremost universities. Having taken up my residence, for the purpose of studying law, in a large city where I have no friends and but very few acquaintances, I am anxious to become a member of some social circle of young ladies and gentlemen in the place I have chosen for my home. I am willing to use all exertions to introduce myself into the society of refined men and women of my own age, but am at a loss how to take the initiatory step. How can I accomplish my wish in the speediest manner? May I receive an answer to my question through your correspondence column?" If you have any friends who know New Haven families, ask for introductions and present them. If you have not, you must be content to live among the people until you are noticed, and in the ordinary way form a circle of friends. This is, for a young man studying, the best—and for all men, as a rule, the safest—way.

Miss Nellie C. (Connecticut) says: "Will you please inform me, through the columns of the *Ledger*, the rate of fare from New York to California? Do you think a couple of young ladies, whose greatest recommendations are their respectability and aptness to learn, could support themselves as readily there as in New York or this State? What branches of business are carried on most extensively there, in which young ladies can engage?" The cost of rail to California is about a hundred dollars, not including food by the way. We see no difficulty in young ladies getting on there that does not lie in their way here; but we think young ladies should get to work where they are known, and gradually extend their knowledge, capacity and connection, rather than drop down, unknown and unintroduced, in a western State. Find out what you can do, get a position, and make a reputation; and then you will easily make your way, if you wish it, to California.

A. O. S. (Wausau, Wis.) says: "I have a fifty-dollar Treasury note, dated March 7, 1864, which promises to pay the bearer, one year after date, fifty dollars, with five per cent. interest. What I want to know is this: Does the above note draw interest for one year only, or is there interest due until the present time? Where should I get the same exchanged, in order to obtain interest? An early answer will oblige an old subscriber." The note will bear interest till it is paid, unless the government should notify the holders of such notes to present them for payment on or before a specified day, and give notice that after that day interest on them would not be paid. The Treasury Department might redeem your note, but we cannot promise that it would do so; or, you might sell it to some broker, as the five per cent. Treasury notes are in demand.

Alice Ingledon (Happy Home) says: "A gentleman and his wife, contemplating a visit to the North during the approaching summer, are anxious to spend a week or two in your city, and would like to be informed how this may be accomplished at the least expense for board, etc. Any information on this subject will be thankfully received." Taking into account comfort, freedom and accommodation, you will do best to stay at a hotel. Get the names of two or three not over-large houses, state your wants and inquire terms, and make your arrangements beforehand. There is no city in the world with greater variety of good hotels than New York possesses.

M. C. R. (High Ridge) says: "I am a constant reader of your valuable *Ledger*, and like it very much, and for the second time venture to ask a few questions, hoping you will be kind enough to answer through the correspondents' column, as soon as possible. How is the word trichina pronounced, and also the name of that noted valley in California, Yo Semite?" Trichina is pronounced tri-*ki*-nah, with the accent on the second syllable, and the i of that syllable sounded as in *ti*dal, *bri*dal, etc. Yo Semite is Yo *Sem*-i-te, with the accent on *sem*, and in four syllables.

D. K. (Modena.)—Our only terms for the *Ledger* are those which are published at the head of the first column on our fourth page. We never vary from them under any circumstances whatever. Any one wanting the *Ledger* at club rates must send his money through a person who gets up a club, and not singly by himself, even though he has previously been a member of a club.

H. L. P. need not hesitate to tell the gentleman directly that she has become convinced of the propriety of his speaking to her parents. She should have done this before giving the promise. "Better late than never."

J. J. O. (Syracuse, N. Y.) says: "I have long read with interest your valuable *Ledger*. In the issue of 18th ult., I noticed an article headed 'Whiskey as Medicine,' Henry Ward Beecher replying to the lady who desires to know if it is right for a physician to prescribe it as a medicine, and was surprised that he did not say emphatically, It is decidedly wrong. I like Henry Ward Beecher, and generally endorse what he says, but in this case I differ with him. I could cite many cases where men and women have become drunkards by beginning the use of whiskey on the recommendation of a doctor. I fully agree with a learned divine, the Rev. J. P. Wilson of Newark, N. J., who says he would not touch a drop to save him from death; and I say, better let a man or woman die and go to glory, rather than advise them to use whiskey or opium. I know of a case where a physician prescribed a small dose of morphine for violent headache, and the person continued taking it until he took twenty grains a day; and I noticed by the report of the Medical Society of Massachusetts last month, that there were 80,000 opium eaters in this country, and I doubt if that number is more than half, as many persons take it so slily that no one knows of it. A druggist in Boston—where I reside—told me a few days since of a woman who purchases sixty grains a day, and takes it. Mr. Beecher is generally *true blue and sound*, but will he not reconsider this subject, and decide it is better that a physician orders something besides whiskey or opium, for they are both equally destructive to soul and body. I don't wish Mr. Beecher to think that I have an idea that I 'know more in my little finger than he does in his soul and body,' as he said was 'the case with the man who scrubbed his father's horses when Mr. Beecher was a boy.'" Mr. Beecher generally forms and states opinions on his own account, and lets them go for what they are worth—the plan we have all to come to. We give our readers the benefit of your opinion also, not because we encourage comments on our contributors—except in the way of questions—but because the subject is of great and mournful interest.

Grace B. (Boston) says: "I have often wished that I might confide in, and ask the advice of some one. I am twenty years old, just the age when life should look pleasant. But it looks dark to me. My father died two years ago and left my mother quite poor, so she is obliged to keep boarders for a living. I write in an office and get small pay, so I cannot aid her much. If anything pleasant presents itself to me I am happy for a moment, and then I think, Well, what will it amount to? I am very much depressed in mind, and shall anxiously wait for your reply." We can hardly put in this reply all we would say to you. Your circumstances are trying, but if you stand the trial, you will come out stronger and better. You should use your mind, and reflect who puts you where you are—why probably—what duties you have to do—why you should do them, and from the best of books you should learn how human spirits are made brave, strong, and contented by Christian faith. You will have to learn the value of that which your name should suggest to you every moment.

An Anxious Wife says: "Will you listen to the sorrows of a young wife, and give her some of your good advice? I have a good and kind husband, and he has but one fault that annoys me, and that is, he will leave me alone until very late at night, to stay out and play cards with his friends. Now is it right? I do not like to find fault with him, but I sometimes think he is growing weary of me. Can it be, when I try so hard to be a good wife? Must I cry, and find fault? Will that stop him? Oh, I am very miserable at times, for I don't know what it may lead to! Please tell me what is right for me to do, and I will abide by it." Possibly he indulges in this course from thoughtlessness, and not with the deliberate intention of neglecting you. But it is unkind, unwise and unmanly, and never leads to any good. Do your duties faithfully, let him know you miss him, be cheerful at home, and look upward to Him who gives every good gift for guidance. Your husband should know that a course like this is not in keeping with the marriage vow to love and cherish you.

Blue Eyes says: "I have written to you twice, and asked you questions, but for some reason you have never answered them. Will you be kind enough to answer these? I am a subscriber to the *Ledger*, and think I shall ever be. My first question is, What is the English for *Tiens ta fois?* Second, do you think it proper for a school-girl to be engaged? Third, do you think, when a person has once loved truly and devotedly, that he or she could ever love again?" 1st. The meaning of the phrase "Tiens ta fois" is, *Keep thy faith*. 2d. Whether or not it would be improper for a school-girl to be engaged, would depend on her age, her advancement, how soon she was going to leave school, her parents' knowledge and approbation of her engagement, and many other things. 3d. Some persons who have once loved truly and devotedly, never love again, and others do it twice. The second love might be as true and devoted as the first, but it would very likely be different.

M. K. (New Lenox, Ill.) says: "In No. 40 of the New York *Ledger*, a correspondent asks why we never hear of railroad locomotives being struck by lightning. I have thought of the same thing, and think I can give an explanation of the phenomenon. In the first place, we must understand that electricity always follows the line of the best conductors, and that in its passing over a conductor sufficiently large, no sensation or disturbance is experienced. The engine is a large mass of iron, brass and polished metal, all of which are good conductors. The wheels run on heavy iron rails held in their places by spikes *pointing down*, and driven into ties that are more or less buried in the moist ground, which, in most all localities, would afford the best possible avenues for the electric charge to pass off without harm, or giving sign even of its passage. It is thus easy to see how locomotives are protected from lightning."

Washington says: "Suppose Mr. A invites two ladies, living in the same house, to accompany him to a concert; the invitation is accepted; after the concert is out, and they are about returning to their homes, Mr. B, with whom the ladies are acquainted, steps up, asks and receives permission of one of the ladies to see her home: who violates the rules of etiquette—the lady who accepted Mr. B's offer, or Mr. B himself?" They both violate the rules of etiquette. As a rule, it would be an intrusion for Mr. B to ask a lady for her company who was with a gentleman who had taken her to the concert; and it would be rude in her to desert her escort at the invitation of another. If the parties were all well acquainted, however, and it was plainly agreeable all round for Mr. B to join them, he might do so in such a way as not to violate any rule of etiquette, and walk home with one of the ladies.

L. K. S. (Kaneville) says: "Our village is in a state of excitement over a little example which is frequently brought up by writing-masters and country school-teachers before their schools: namely, A note is given for a certain amount, and is written $50 100-100. Now which is right? to read it as fifty-one dollars, or fifty dollars and ten cents, or fifty dollars and one cent? Please let me know which of these ways is the right one." The amount of a note written thus would be fifty-one dollars; but if the figures are to be read as they are written, the reading would be "fifty and one hundred hundredths dollars," which is the same as fifty dollars and one hundred cents, and that, of course, is the same as fifty-one dollars. Have you nothing more important to occupy your attention in your village?

W. D. (Greenville) says: "You will oblige several of your readers by answering the following question, which has caused considerable discussion. When taking a young lady to a ball, or any place of amusement, where the expenses are incurred by the gentleman, of course, who is the proper person, after seeing the young lady to her home, to return thanks?" It is always to be assumed that the gentleman is the party gratified and honored. Ladies always confer such favors, and the gentlemen should acknowledge them. This will not prevent a true lady from saying that it has been a pleasure to her, or that she is obliged for the escort. A lady is never supposed to be under money obligations to a gentleman in such circumstances.

Mamie A. (St. Louis) says: "As I always read your kind replies to innumerable correspondents, I thought I would venture to intrude myself upon your notice, and also ask a question. It is this: Is it customary for a lady, when being married in travelling attire, to have bride's-maids, or not? Some of my friends advise for, and some against having any. Will you be kind enough to reply in one of your papers, and at your earliest possible convenience, and oblige." So far as we have observed, when a lady is married in travelling dress, there are no bride's-maids. They could not, we presume, appear in the usual style of such officials, while she is in travelling costume; and is not much of the charm of being bride's-maid in the dress?

S. A. C. (Glendale, Miss.,) says: "*I* too come to you for advice. Please heed my inquiry, and let me hear from you. Is there any institution North where one can get a girl from any orphan asylum, or any such place, by giving good recommendation as to character, etc.? Help of any kind is so difficult to secure in this country, that I am anxious to get a girl. I will raise her as my own, as I do my housework and want an assistant, one on whom I can depend, and to keep long enough to pay for my teaching, trouble, etc. Please direct me as to where I can find such an institution, so that I may take steps to secure one at as early a day as possible." Write to the managers of the Howard Mission, New York city.

J. T. C. (Williamsport) asks: "Can a person sell his interest in property without the approval of the other owners? I want to sell my interest in certain property, as I wish to leave home and would like to have it closed up. By answering this you will confer a great favor." You have a legal right to sell all your right, title and interest in any property whatever; but the purchaser would have to run the risk of getting possession, and also take his chance in the division of the property and the final adjustment of affairs.

A Boy of Fifteen (Brooklyn) says: "Will you please inform me through the Notices to Correspondents, if England was at war with any other nations at the time that she was at war with America, in 1812; and if so, what other nations were they?" During a portion of the time which our war of 1812 lasted, England, in coalition with other European nations, was at war with France, trying to crush the colossal power of Napoleon.

A. L. B. (Philadelphia) says: "Having derived much knowledge and pleasure from your paper, I take this method of expressing my satisfaction, as well as to ask you the following questions, hoping you will not throw it aside, as I would very much like to know. What is the meaning of the words *semper idem?* To what language do they belong?" The phrase *semper idem* is Latin, and means "always the same."

Miggs (Washington) asks: "Does invertible mean that may, can, or might be inverted? or that cannot be inverted? I would like very much to know, as we have had some disputes over the word, and I am not satisfied that it means cannot be inverted." You will have to accept the definition or meaning which you so heartily disapprove. Invertible means incapable of being inverted or turned.

Frank (Iowa) asks: "Is the phrase, 'I fetched a bucket of water,' proper, or, in other words, is the word *fetched*, as used instead of *brought*, in certain sentences, proper?" Yes; *fetched* is a good and proper word, as you can learn by consulting any dictionary.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*